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VOL. XXX No. 50 DECEMBER 13, 1947 FIFTEEN CENTS

H. E. Bates, author of "The Purple Plain." (See page 13)

Demi-Devil or Child of Pain?

By LOUIS KRONENBERGER

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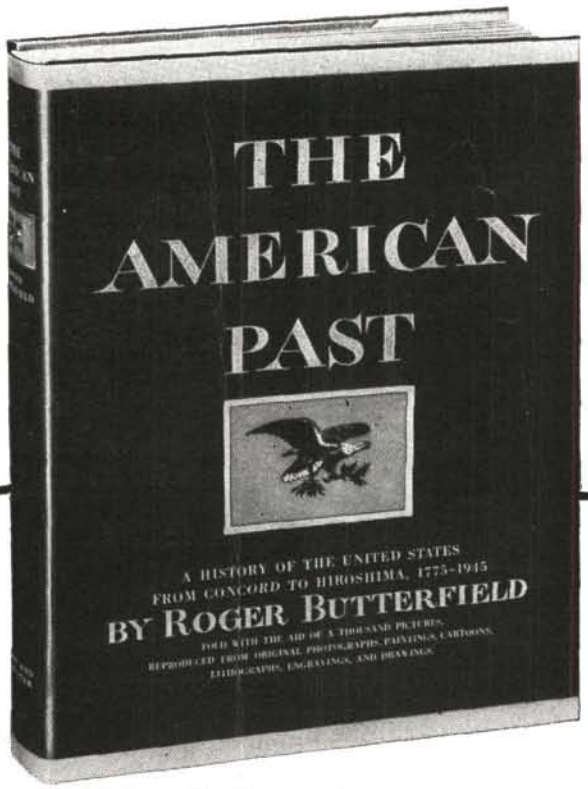

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This Week

December 13, 1947

Cover Drawing by Frances O'Brien

Article

PAGE

POPE—DEMI-DEVIL OR CHILD OF PAIN?
By Louis Kronenberger 9

Reviews

ALBERT SCHWEITZER: AN ANTHOLOGY
Edited by Charles R. Roy

ALBERT SCHWEITZER: THE MAN AND HIS MIND
By George Seaver

PROPHET IN THE WILDERNESS
By Hermann Hagedorn
Reviewed by Robert Pick 11

THE PERSON AND THE COMMON GOOD
By Jacques Maritain
Reviewed by Asher Brynes 13

THE PURPLE PLAIN
By H. E. Bates
Reviewed by Harrison Smith 13

STRANGE LIFE OF IVAN OSOKIN
By P. D. Ouspensky
Reviewed by Aaron Sussman 15

JENNY VILLIERS
By J. B. Priestley
Reviewed by Catherine Meredith Brown 15

NOTHING SO STRANGE
By James Hilton
Reviewed by George Dangerfield 16

AMERICA'S DESTINY
By Herman Finer
Reviewed by Asher Brynes 16

AND SO TO AMERICA
By Cecil Roberts
Reviewed by John T. Winterich 18

LAND OF LIBERTY
By Fred Hamlin
Reviewed by Raymond Walters, Jr. 18

THE AMERICAN ILIAD
By Otto Eisenschiml and Ralph Newman
Reviewed by Brig. Gen. Donald Armstrong 19

TIME AND CHANCE
By Cyrus Le Roy Baldridge
Reviewed by Walter Havighurst 26

GREEN MEMORIES
By Lewis Mumford
Reviewed by Merle Miller 28

Departments

TRADE WINDS
By Bennett Cerf 6

MY CURRENT READING
By Raymond Massey 10

LITERARY CRYPT 12

EDITORIAL 20

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 21

SEEING THINGS
By John Mason Brown 22

LITERARY I.Q. 24

NEW EDITIONS
By Ben Ray Redman 25

BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
By Mary Gould Davis 32

THE NEW RECORDINGS
By Edward Tatnall Canby 34

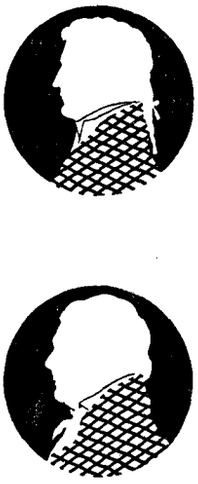
THE PHOENIX NEST
By William Rose Benét 35

DOUBLE-CROSTIC No. 716 39

THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Lillian Grannon, Assistant Treasurer; Robert A. Low, Advertising Manager; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director; Arthur Bodenheimer, Assistant Circulation Director. Subscriptions $6 a year; $7 in Canada. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U. S. Vol. XXX, No. 50. December 13, 1947. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." Entire Issue, Copyright, 1947, by Saturday Review Associates, Inc.

JOHN BAKELESS

Lewis & Clark



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☆ ☆ *Stars in my Crown*

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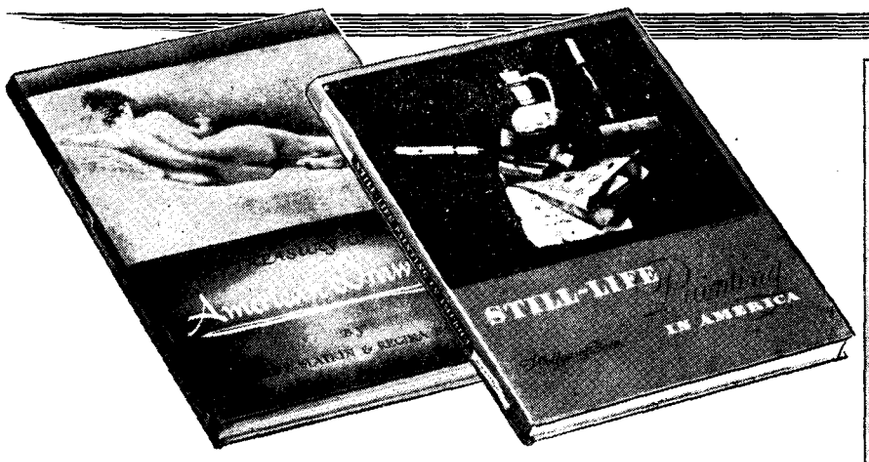
OXFORD BOOKS OF LASTING IMPORTANCE



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TRADE Winds

THE FIRST THING a cub reporter usually must learn when he graduates from a class in writing and actually lands a newspaper job is to forget highfalutin language and gingerbread dressing, and get his story on paper in as terse and economical a manner as possible. The verbiage of a budding novelist tends also to be pretentious and gaudy—when he isn't imitating Hemingway, Farrell, or *The New Yorker* formula. At the School of Journalism old Talcott Williams used to pound into us, "Get the names, place, and highlights of your story into the first paragraph. Add the trimmings later—where the city editor can blue-pencil them if he's short of space. Interest the reader if possible with your very first sentence."

Stanley Frank and Paul Sann tell a classic story about a cub reporter in Johnstown, Pa., at the time of the disastrous flood in 1889. The first flash reached the nearest big-time newspaper office late at night when only the newest addition to the staff—a droopy youth just out of school—was on tap. The editor hustled him to the scene of the catastrophe, and spent the next hour in a frenzied effort to get his veteran reporters on the job. By then it was too late, however. All wires were down, and the valley was isolated. For twenty-four hours the only reporter in the devastated area was one green beginner!

The press of America waited feverishly for his first report. Finally it began to trickle in over the telegraph. "God sits upon a lonely mountaintop tonight and gazes down upon a desolate Johnstown. The roar of swirling waters echoes through. . . ." The editor tore his hair and rushed a wire back to his poet laureate: "Okay. Forget flood. Interview God. Rush pictures." . . .

BEGINNERS SEEKING criticism of first novels or short stories, incidentally, should consult qualified teachers or literary agents. Comprehensive lists of same may be obtained from:

Authors League of America, 6 East 39th St., New York City
R. R. Bowker & Co., 62 West 45th Street, New York City
H. W. Wilson Company, 950 University Avenue, New York City
The Writer, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, Mass.

People seeking jobs in the publishing business should refer to:

American Book Publishers Council, 62 West 47th St., New York City
Book and Magazine Guild, 30 East 29th Street, New York City

People who want to know how to go about opening a new bookshop can get helpful advice from:

The American News Co., 131 Varick Street, New York City
The Baker & Taylor Co., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City
Book Publishers Bureau, 62 West 47th Street, New York City. . . .

WHEN THE FOLLOWING piece appeared some time ago in *Variety*, I begged the author to revise it slightly for Trade Winds purposes. This he has done in noble fashion, and the result is printed with the kind permission of *Variety*'s dynamic editor, Abel Green.

THE CLAMBAKE AWARD

By Harry Kurnitz

Oliver Orpheus, the story genius of Clambake Films, was pacing the floor of his office with the eager air of a man with big news to impart. He waved me to a chair, then climbed nimbly into his own.

"Take a scoop," said Orpheus. "Clambake Films is going to have a novel contest."

I pointed out that Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer already had a novel contest, awarding semi-annually a vast sum in cash and royalties. "Can you hope to top Metro?" I asked.

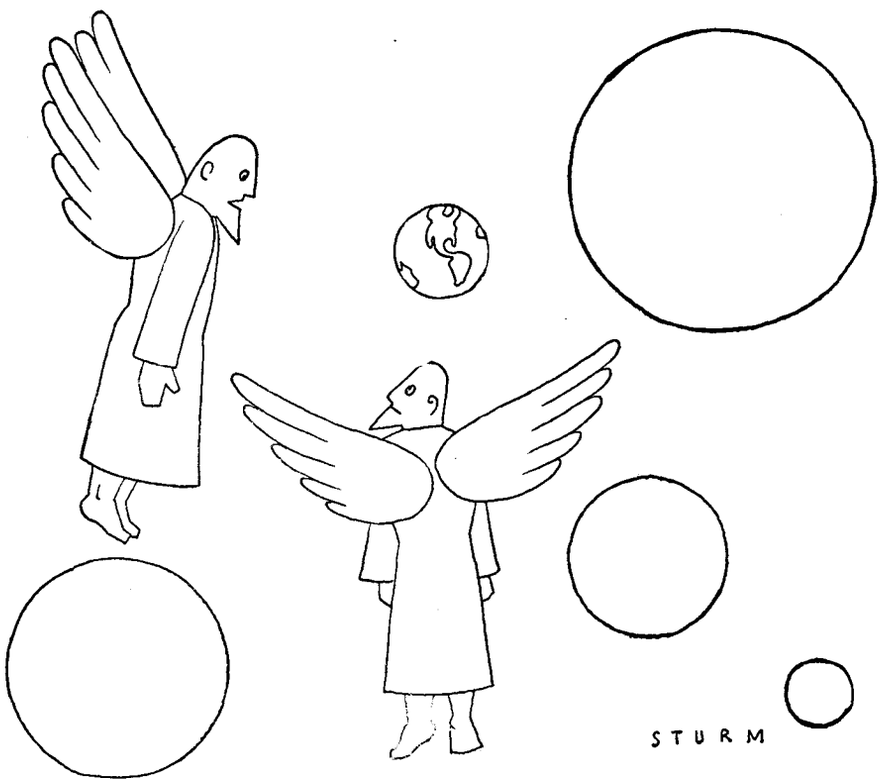
"*Our* prize," murmured Orpheus, "is the city of Cleveland, Ohio." He sneered in the general direction of Culver City. "Furthermore, the winner may keep Cleveland, or, after six months, sell the whole thing as a capital gain."

"Sensational!" I cried, snatching at the phone on his desk. "Let me phone *The Saturday Review of Literature*. They'll have to tear out the front page to make room for this, but it's worth it."

"A few more details," said Orpheus. "The publisher of the prize-winning novel will receive a special award consisting of any other publishing company he chooses, which will be presented to him, lock, stock, barrel, and authors. The agent of the winning novelist, in addition to the customary ten per cent, will receive a ninety-nine-year lease on the front booth in Romanoff's restaurant, and all his clients will be equipped, at our expense, with a new photo-electric device which cries 'Stop, Thief!' if the client so much as pauses in the vicinity of the MCA building. Naturally, with so much at stake, the judges have been chosen with infinite care: they are Princess Zoraida, a spiritualist who is in constant touch with the late Charles Dickens and who will read him all the entries; Storm Signals, the literary editor of the *Daily Running Horse*, and (with a modest smile) yours truly. No novel can be submitted to the contest by phone and entries which are telegraphed collect will be disqualified. If two or more writers submit identical novels, the entry bearing the earlier postmark will receive the award. There are no rules as to length, except that no writer may submit a manuscript weighing more than the writer himself."

"Eminently fair, but is the contest restricted? Can anyone compete for the rich prize?"

"The contest is open to every



"Well, Gabriel, it's a small world."

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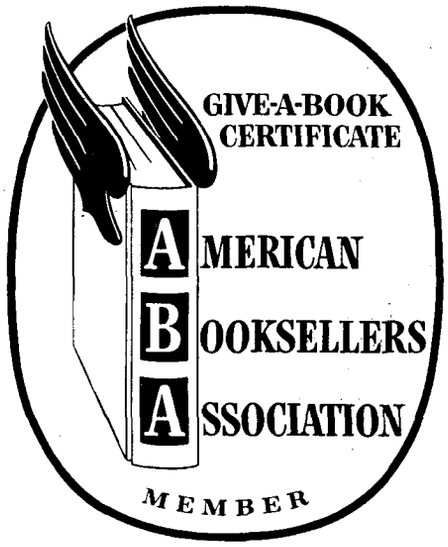
"What about the novels themselves? Their subject matter?"

"Novels which seem to be about something will be submitted to an advisory committee headed by J. Parnell Thomas."

"It's all in the best American tradition," I said, gathering up my notes. "Clambake Films has made history and rendered a great service to American authors. Writers everywhere will praise you to the skies."

"They damn well better," snarled Orpheus. "Just let me hear a peep out of those lousy hacks and they'll soon find out who's boss." . . .

ERNEST HEMINGWAY told a friend, "I must be slipping. No new anthology containing my 'Snows of Kilimanjaro' has been published in almost four days." . . . Whitney Darrow insists that his resignation from Scribner's is the real McCoy and that he and Mrs. Darrow are going South for "at least a month's vacation—our first in years." The publishing scene without Whitney Darrow on deck somewhere is unthinkable. Trade Winds offers eight to one he's back in harness come the first spring catalogue. . . . Recommended to theatre lovers: Edmond Gagey's lively "Revolution in American Drama" (Columbia University Press) . . . Harry Abrams, of the Book-of-the-Month Club, has designed a series of Christmas cards for Gallery Artists that is out of this world. The Utrillo, Dufy, and Picasso reproductions are particularly successful. Ask to see this line before you make your final selections. . . . The *Philadelphia Inquirer*'s Sunday Book Review Section, edited by David Appel, is now printed in rotogravure, and in an enlarged and handsome new format. . . . American booksellers have simplified Christmas shopping this year by making Give-a-Book certificates available throughout the country. You mail a certificate for any amount you designate and let the recipient choose the gift books he really wants at any convenient bookstore that displays this emblem:

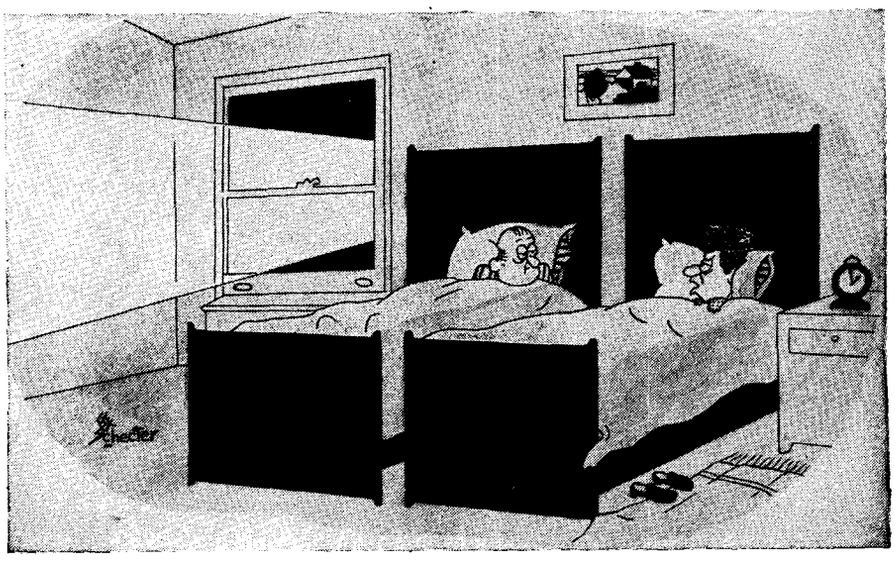


DOUGLAS HUNT TREASURES a bookseller's ad in the *Birmingham News*, in which a list of titles gives, possibly by accident, a romantic story with a sad ending:

"This Side of Innocence"
"Good Intentions"
"How to Pick a Mate"
"The Male Hormone"
"Try and Stop Me"
"Help Yourself to Happiness"
"How to Worry Successfully"
"For My Great Folly"
"Threesome" . . .

Two venerable gentlemen met on the veranda of a New England inn one summer's day in the Eighties. One of them spiced his conversation with so many elaborate quotations that the other grew curious and interrupted with, "What did you say your name was, my good sir?" "Bartlett," was the answer, "John Bartlett."

BENNETT CERF.



"The nerve—playing their television set so brightly at this hour!"

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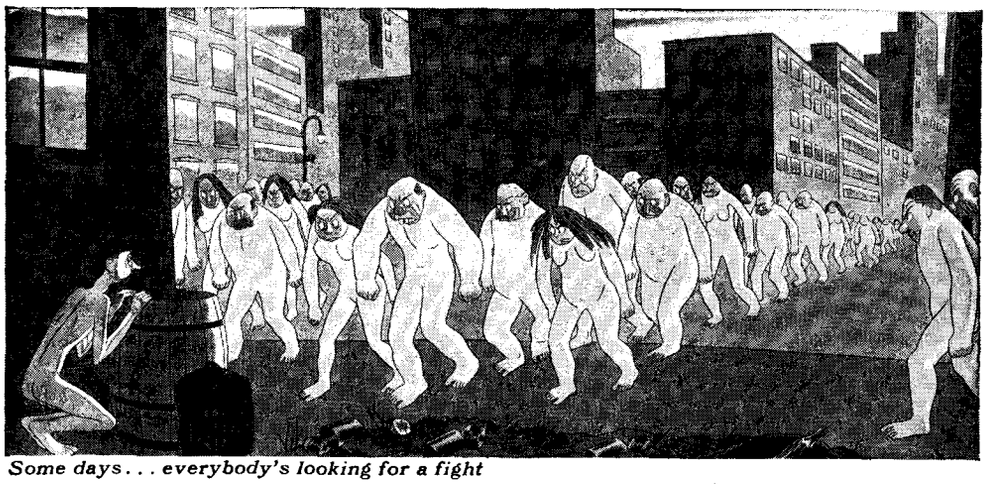
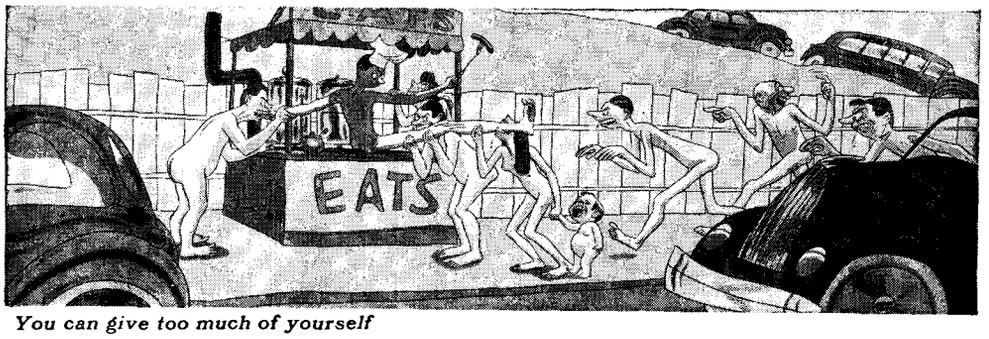
Ever feel like this? (→)



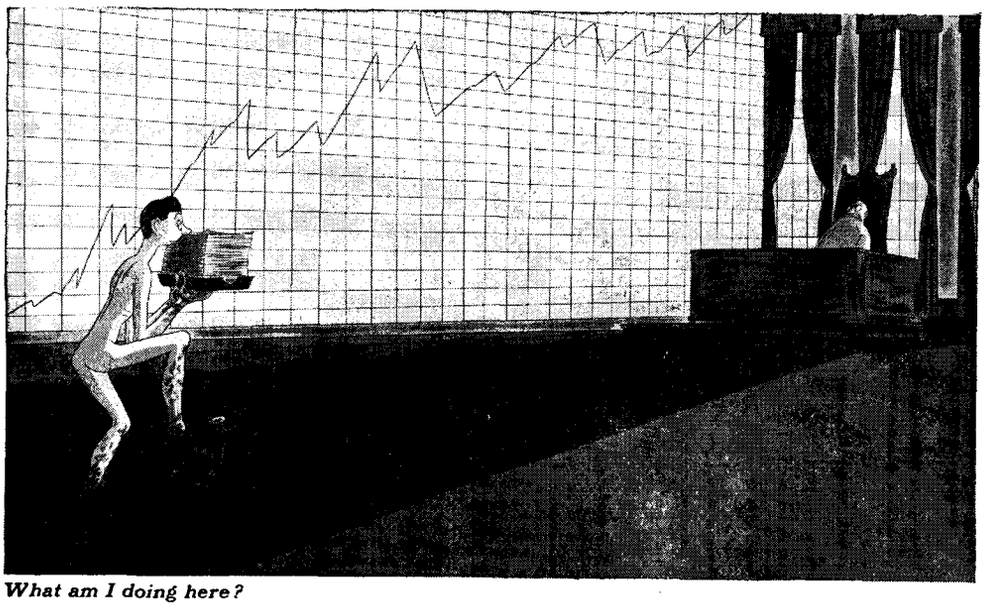
Some days . . . everybody's looking for a fight

Or like this? (→)



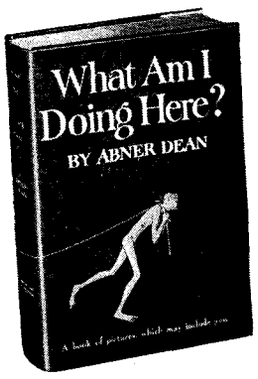
You can give too much of yourself

Or this? (→)



What am I doing here?

Then you will enjoy laughing hollowly at yourself in a new book of drawings



What Am I Doing Here?

By ABNER DEAN

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MERRY KRISSMUS KRAZY!

Men and women in this business have a disconcerting way of wanting books for Christmas; we hear that SRL readers have the same way about them. Since KRAZY KAT is a special favorite of ours we think it's probably one of yours, too. We've been asked to repeat the following page which we wrote over a year ago. We mean it just as much today, but we want to add an additional remark. Krazy is the spirit of Krissmus.

WHEN you come upon love you know it. An old man sitting by a window looking over hills; a woman making chili sauce on an October afternoon; a girl smiling in the night. Having known love, you can then find pleasure in things which remind you of it. Later on to look out over those same hills and see what the old man saw; some other October the smell of chili sauce cooking in a kitchen; another girl, perhaps, to smile in the night. We become fond of things if we can once connect them with love.

Sometimes a stray combination of words will have the kind of emotional satisfaction these other things have had, sometimes a formal poem or a piece of prose. More rarely, a single character will have qualities of wisdom and sadness and truth and beauty which all of us recognize because we have been looking for them for such a long time. When that happens we can relax and be at home again, knowing simply that these things remind us of the wise, sad, true and beautiful things which have touched our own lives. Occasionally whole groups of dissimilar people adopt a character for these very unliterary reasons, and the harassed professional critic has to hurry around to find out why. Under the circumstances the usual verdict of "universality" means that some very common emotional values have been fulfilled in an unexpected way. In our time we know of two specific occasions when this has happened: once when a little man with big shoes and huge dark eyes twirled his cane across a screen; once in the comic strip KRAZY KAT.

Today everyone knows about Charlie Chaplin and a great many people know about Krazy. Most of them talk about her with a special fond foolishness. But E. E. Cummings, a Kat-o-phile from way back, in his introduction to KRAZY KAT in book form, writes about her with a special fond sagacity. "Let's make no mistake about Krazy," he says. "A lot of people 'love' because, and a lot of people 'love' although, and a few individuals love. Love is something illimitable; and a lot of people spend their limited lives trying to prevent anything illimitable from happening to them. Krazy, however, is not a lot of people. Krazy is herself. Krazy is illimitable—she loves."

Considering for a moment the possible improbable idea that you have never seen the Kat, here she is. A dumpy little figure who speaks an entirely inconsistent and personal language. She will say, "I aint a Kat and I aint Krazy" and who is to confute her? She will catch a falling star and take it home to keep it warm. She is happy beyond time when Ignatz Mouse hits her with his brick because the brick to Krazy is the living symbol of love. Ignatz, on the other hand, is everything Krazy is not; worldly, dissatisfied, incapable of the realization that hers is the unshakable triumph of love. The triangle, for of course it is a triangle, is completed by Offissa Pupp, law and order in person, who is constantly striving to protect "that dear Kat" from Ignatz' brick.

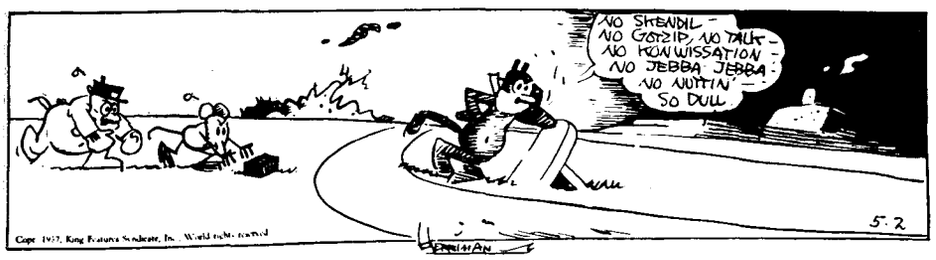
These are the protagonists of George Herriman's strip. None of the things that happen in Coconino County, scene of our drama, are especially predictable except the one certain and unalterable and ever recurring act of Krazy and Ignatz and the brick. It happens and then it happens again. And it's not so easy to say why this comic strip is a wonderful thing and a genuine piece of Americana. It's never easy to say why a thing is dear to the hearts of a people. If you've ever tried to say how certain hills are different from any other hills, or how one smile is different from any other smile, you share our problem. (Not forgetting for a moment that this is a great period for the application of labels and that you are certainly going to be tagged a "Romantic". This has happened to a lot of very respectable people and we won't mind it at all if it happens to us.)

Falling back on allegory, we have one nicer-than-fiction story which may complete our point. It happened when the editor in charge of KRAZY KAT was going through stacks and stacks of the original strips, selecting and arranging those to appear in this book. They were so bulky that she took the whole lot up to an empty room some floors above our offices and spent days and days crawling around on her hands and knees with the strips spread over the floor. When the job was done she was a physically tired editor and the thought of carrying all those bulky cardboards downstairs to her office made her unhappy. So she picked up the phone and asked to be connected with our office boy Pete. Pete hadn't been with us long and anyway he's a little hesitant of the unknown. Our editor, on the other hand, had lived with the Kat for such a long time that she thought it must be known to everyone in the world, certainly to everyone in the office. "Pete," she said, "I'm up on the eighteenth floor with a lot of Krazy Kats. Would you please come up and get them out of here?"

Followed a long pause.

Finally the small voice belonging to Pete said, "Are they alive?"

Our editor made an appropriate answer which we've since forgotten. The important part is what she knew and didn't say—what we know too and are saying now—that KRAZY KAT will always be alive. When you come upon love, you know it.



KRAZY KAT
BY GEORGE HERRIMAN
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
E. E. CUMMINGS
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The Saturday Review of Literature

Pope—Demi-Devil Or Child of Pain?

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

—*Mary Morris.*
Louis Kronenberger

EVEN today, even after two hundred years, Pope's name continues to be ringed with controversy, as Chatterton's with pathos or Byron's with scandal. Moreover, the world goes on loudly and heatedly disputing not only how good Pope was as a poet but how bad he was as a man. It goes on playing the detective at least as zestfully as it plays the critic; and whatever conclusions it arrives at, it goes on being fascinated. Great poet or very special poet or no poet at all, Pope—it will nowhere, I think, be denied—charged his couplets with intense and insistent life; aggressor or victim, demi-devil or child of pain, Pope everywhere still makes his presence passionately felt.

Like Chatterton, like Byron, Pope boasts a "story" as well as an achievement: indeed, his character was so devious and his career so dazzling that they have often shifted the limelight from the poetry to the poet, and made the "little monster" who hobnobbed with dukes rather more of a figure than the author of "The Dunciad" and the "Epilogue to the Satires." Furthermore, the "story" and the achievement have forcibly affected each other. Thus some of the Victorians, quite sure that very little about Pope was creditable, went on to wonder how much of him could be great; and today there are those who act as if whitewashing his character was a *sine qua non* to appreciating his art.

Today, at any rate, Pope's goodness is far more in question than his greatness: his greatness, I think it might even be ventured, is no longer in question at all. Classicism has only needed a friendly hearing for so famous a classicist to be once more acclaimed. Abuse has only needed to be considered as "poetic" as, say, eulogy, for the most telling of our satirists to exert on the twentieth century some of the force he exerted on the eighteenth. Meanwhile the man continues to be wrangled over. *Were* his provocations greater than his revenges? Do his handicaps on the whole excuse his faults? Was he more sinned against than sinning — and quite as much the victim of his age as of his ailments? Or was he most of all the victim of a succeeding age —of Victorian smugness and self-righteousness and of that Victorianism which, resenting its repressions, so frequently managed to be cruel while it pretended to be moral?

Alexander Pope was born in London on the 21st of May, 1688. Both his parents were then past forty and both (his father by conversion) Roman Catholics. Both were also of what we should now describe as middle-class origin; for Pope's claims that on his father's side he descended down some circular staircase from an earl were long ago disposed of. The boy received a very jumbled and discontinuous schooling, hardly so much at school as among priests and tutors, and in later life could claim with some accuracy to be largely self-taught. He made a good-looking child who at ten had a "plump, pretty face" and a "fresh complexion"; but soon after Pope began to suffer from ill-health and in particular from a tuberculous infection that in time caused him to be deformed. Condemned to be a hunchback not five feet tall, tormented with headaches and other recurring ailments, the youth was early set apart from most of his kind as much by his disabilities as by his genius.

Shut off by his faith from many callings, and by his health from many others, the young Pope was yet not altogether unfortunate. He could be what alone he seems ever to have wanted to be; he could be a poet. Fortunately, too, his parents raised no objections, and there was the family purse to give substance to the family blessing.

Drawn by Edwin Earle.
"Because of Pope anybody might wake up of a morning to find himself infamous."

Thus Pope was started on a grown-up career at an age when even most serious boys are satisfied with collecting coins. Before he was seventeen, Pope was exchanging letters with the aging Wycherley; and both Walsh and Congreve sufficiently admired Pope's youthful "Pastorals" to bring them to the attention of the well-known bookseller — we should say publisher—Jacob Tonson; and in 1708, when Pope was twenty, Tonson published them in one of his "Miscellanies." Now Pope was really launched; another five years and, having published both the "Essay on Criticism" and "The Rape of the Lock," he would be really famous.

YET ANOTHER five years, which brings us to Pope at thirty, and he had not only become the most celebrated poet of his age, he had also revolutionized the poet's place in the world. He was something much rarer, for a poet, than illustrious; he was independent. He had made, or would very soon have made, well over five thousand pounds from his translation of the Iliad—which is much like making over $100,000 in America today. This was the pivotal, the decisive, thing in Pope's life. It saved him from ever having to be a hack. It enabled him to regard the lords he moved among as friends rather than patrons.

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made it possible for him to settle down for the rest of his life at Twickenham, where he might busy himself with his garden and his grotto, care for his mother, receive his guests, polish his verse, touch up his letters, nurse his feuds, and amplify his fame.

It can only be because Pope is so extremely notorious for his enmities that he is not remarkably famous for his friendships. Few men, certainly, have had more glittering connections —and these include connections with writers. The greatest writer of the age, Dean Swift, was very nearly Pope's greatest friend. Gay, Congreve, Prior, Thomas, Steele were all men with whom Pope moved on easy or affectionate terms. One sentence from a letter of Pope's written when he was twenty-nine, and rather on the threshold than at the apex of his glory, will aptly enough convey how well he did in the great world: "After some attendance on my Lord Burlington, I have been at the Duke of Shrewsbury's, Duke of Argyle's, Lady Rochester's, Lord Percival's, Mr. Stonor's, Lord Winchelsea's, Sir Godfrey Kneller, who has made me a fine present of a picture, and Duchess Hamilton's."

Pope followed his translation of the Iliad with his edition of Shakespeare and his translation of the Odyssey. These three undertakings bring us to 1726 and to Pope at thirty-eight. It is to be noted that though for a number of years he had been easily the first poet of the age, of the poetry for which we really value him today he had written nothing but "The Rape of the Lock" and some scattered verses. It is to be noted further that though Pope, long before 1726, had become the center of numerous feuds, he had almost never retorted upon his enemies in print. Barring some early pieces, there was only the "Atticus" portrait of Addison. Indeed, Pope's career as a satirist, which is in the vital sense his career as a poet, was only now to begin. From the first version of "The Dunciad" in 1729 to the final version of "The Dunciad" in 1743, Pope produced a body of his work, a succession of masterpieces, which do something to justify the existence of malice in this world, and which include, so far as that goes, not simply the vitriol Pope threw so unerringly in the faces of his personal enemies, but a massive onslaught against mediocrity, incompetence, and dulness. In the design and much of the detail of "The Dunciad"; in the "Moral Essays"; and most of all in the "Satires" and "Epistles," Pope brought his genius to its fullest flower.

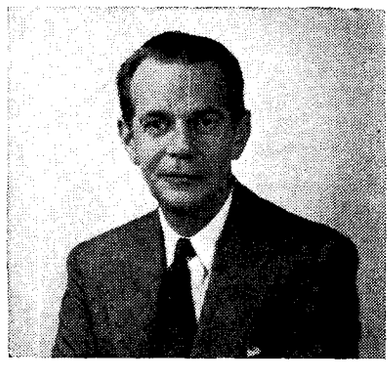
Life, all in all, had perhaps not grown sunnier as it grew more distinguished. The Prince of Wales might come to visit Pope at Twickenham and the Queen of England hint that she would like to come; and every year Pope might make the circuit of patrician country houses, as too he might enjoy the devotion of his friends and that final homage, the quaking terror of his enemies. Still, there was a good deal amiss. Though the hump might grow no bigger on Pope's back, it loomed larger and larger in Pope's mind. From the outset of his career he had never been allowed to forget his appearance; he had had to endure such taunts in print as Dennis's about "a young, squat, short gentleman . . . the very bow of the God of Love." Even more painfully, he had had to endure the common fate of the misshapen, becoming in the eyes of the other sex an object of pity when he was not an outright object of scorn. The story goes—and the hardness of the age, not to speak of the hardness of the lady, tends to support it—that upon Pope's declaring his feelings for Lady Mary Montagu, she was seized with laughter. The story of his love for Martha Blount has doubtless been much embroidered, lacking solid facts to build on; but very possibly Pope did love her, and if so, loved in vain.

All this, as time went on, could have made Pope no happier: nor must we forget that he was chronically ill as well as deformed, and that there is no great exaggeration in his celebrated reference to "that long disease, my life." From boyhood the headaches had been agonies, and as life wore on there were more serious ailments as well. Then, too, one after another of his closest friends began dropping away: Gay died, and Arbuthnot; Atterbury was sentenced to exile, and Swift, after a time, sentenced himself. Doubtless the enmities remained more fixed. There had always been dunces to flay, and Dennises to be flayed by. There was to the very end —Pope died of a dropsy when he was fifty-six—the need and the ability to have the last word.

THE need to have the last word is a common enough and never very engaging trait; and though the source of it is occasionally pride, it is infinitely oftener vanity. Pope was one of the vainest and hence one of the touchiest men who ever lived. Edith Sitwell, the most ardent champion of Pope to have yet appeared, says that vanity was "the one grave fault in his character." This in a sense is quite true, but hardly redeems Pope so much as Miss Sitwell fancies. After all, vanity is the one grave fault in most people's characters; being, surely, the *fons et origo* of almost everything unpleasant or evil in their actions. Nevertheless, even though Miss Sitwell shuts her eyes to the enormity of Pope's misbehavior, it is good to find her understanding the nature of it. It keeps Pope altogether human; it quite disproves him a monster.

All the same, we need not pretend that the world of his time was the prettier for having Pope in it. His talent for getting in the last word must have made him loom a perpetual menace; just about what a vastly malicious columnist of brilliant gifts and immense reputation —who had little to fear from the laws of libel—would be today. For it was very evident that because of Pope anybody might wake up of a morning to find himself infamous. Pope, moreover—it is one of the most devastating things about him as an artist, but most damning as a man—seldom lashed

(*Continued on page 29*)



My Current Reading

Raymond Massey, well-known actor of stage and screen, this week contributes a list of his reading to *SRL*'s continuing survey of the reading of figures in the public eye. Until recently Mr. Massey was playing in New York City in Donald Ogden Stewart's "How I Wonder."

THE RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM, *by Edward Fitzgerald*

SPEAKING FRANKLY, *by James F. Byrnes (Harper)*

GREAT MORNING!, *by Sir Osbert Sitwell (Little, Brown)*

GUS THE GREAT, *by Thomas W. Duncan (Lippincott)*

STARS IN MY CROWN, *by Joe David Brown (Morrow)*

THE LAST DAYS OF HITLER, *by H. R. Trevor-Roper (Macmillan)*

INSIDE U.S.A., *by John Gunther (Harper)*

DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE (Vol. III), *by Edward Gibbon*

WITCHCRAFT IN ENGLAND, *by Christina Hole (Scribner's)*

THE PROPER BOSTONIANS, *by Cleveland Amory (Dutton)*

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Ideas. *Three of us were talking one day. The specialist in tropical diseases praised Schweitzer's medical work in Africa. "I've heard about it," the minister said, "but to me Schweitzer is the author of 'Paul and His Interpreters'—a great, a profound book. I've read it many times." "Yes, but have you heard Schweitzer's organ records of Bach?" we asked. "The playing's magnificent, but you get more out of them if you also read his life of Bach." "Each of you knows part of the man," the philosopher interrupted. "Schweitzer, it's true, is a genius in many fields, including mine. But to me it's not only his work. Schweitzer shows us in his life what a man can be. He's a whole man. In my opinion Schweitzer is the one great man of this century."*

The Thirteenth Disciple

ALBERT SCHWEITZER. An Anthology. Edited by Charles R. Roy. Boston: The Beacon Press. 1947. 323 *pp.* $5.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER: The Man and His Mind. By George Seaver. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 346 *pp.* $3.75.

PROPHET IN THE WILDERNESS: The Story of Albert Schweitzer. By Hermann Hagedorn, New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 221 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

ONE OF the anecdotes often retold by Albert Schweitzer's admirers relates how the Old Doctor of Lambaréné, forced one day to bring some building timber under cover in great haste—the rains were approaching—asked an "educated" native visiting with one of the hospital patients to lend him a hand. Watching the doctor's manual labor with some bewilderment, the man said he was an intellectual and didn't drag wood about. "You're lucky," Schweitzer replied, "I too wanted to become an intellectual, but I didn't succeed."

That "retort courteous" was more than a good-humored *mot*. This doctor of theology, doctor of philosophy, doctor of medicine, doctor of music; this surgeon, preacher, judge, agriculturalist, and missionary, this great writer and world-famous organist is no intellectual—no mere intellectual; or to put it more correctly, he did not succeed in staying a mere intellectual. He reversed, as it were, the decision of his namesake, Albertus Magnus: contrary to the *doctor universalis* who renounced his public and pastoral functions to devote himself to the sciences and philosophy, Schweitzer was prepared to sacrifice his scholarly pursuits to active discipleship among the most pitiable and most wronged of his fellowmen. That he, "like Abraham," was spared the ultimate sacrifice, and that his service did not impair but enhanced his multifarious intellectual and artistic activities—this is one of the marvels of his life.

He was born, in 1875, in Alsace—"between two nations," as the linguistic, or ethnic, "anomaly" of his native province is often referred to. It was this very "anomaly" that prevented him from being exposed to nationalism in his childhood and youth. And to add another "anomaly" to his early experiences, the little church of Günsbach, his father's Lutheran parish, was one of the few in Europe used for both Catholic and Protestant services. To Albert Schweitzer, that historical phenomenon was "a prophecy and an exhortation to a future religious unity."

There was never any room for ecclesiastical doctrine in his belief. "The Quest of the Historical Jesus," the first full-length book of the graduate from Strasburg and the Sorbonne, came as a shock to tradition-bound piety. Its young author proved that Jesus thought the end of the world to be at hand, and therewith showed Him as having been subject to human error. But these findings could not interfere with Jesus's religious authority, and the truth of his message:

> . . . There is silence all around. The Baptist appears, and cries: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Soon after that comes Jesus, and in the knowledge that He is the coming Son of Man, lays hold of the wheel of the world to set it moving on that last revolution which is to bring all ordinary history to a close. It refuses to turn, and He throws Himself upon it. Then it does turn; and crushes Him. Instead of bringing the eschatological conditions, He has destroyed them. The wheel rolls onward, and the mangled body of the one immeasurable great Man . . . is hanging upon it still. That is His victory and His reign.

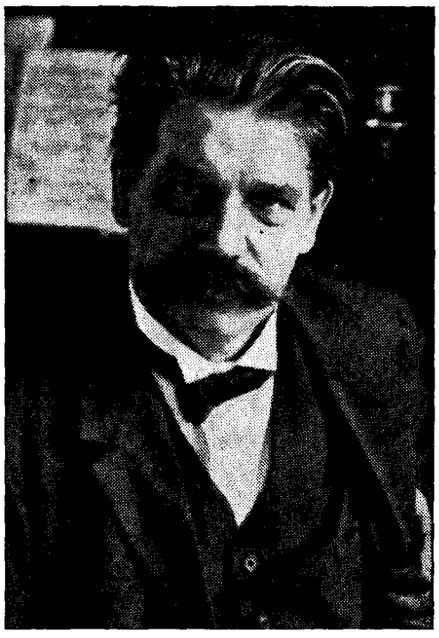
Already in that book, Schweitzer's own future is forecast:

> He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lake-side, He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same words: "Follow thou me!" and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the suffering which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience Who He is.

While still immersed in writing "The Quest," Schweitzer began to work on his classic biography of Johann Sebastian Bach. He disproved the concept of Bach as the foremost representative of "pure, absolute, mathematical" music, and demonstrated that, in his Chorale Preludes, Bach aimed at that poet-painter-musician unity which alone makes the true artist. Outwardly, his thesis seemed to be but another echo of the Wagner - versus - Brahms discussion still raging at the turn of the century. But at the bottom of Schweitzer's views lay the idea of wholeness which was to find its acme in himself.

His own Bach recitals on the organ —he has given them in scores of European cathedrals and churches for the benefit of his African hospital—may be called a *restitutio in integrum* of Bach's music when compared to the "effective" Bach playing widely in vogue before. His love of Bach's favorite medium has also made Albert Schweitzer the greatest living authority on organ building.

This, briefly—and without trying to do any justice to Schweitzer's Kant studies and the beginnings of his Pauline research (which later re-



Albert Schweitzer "did not succeed in staying a mere intellectual."

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sulted in his books "Paul and his Interpreters" and "The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle")—this, then, was the man who in his thirtieth year resolved to follow literally Jesus's last command to His disciples: "Preach the word, heal the sick, cast out devils. Freely ye have received, freely give."

The yearning gaze and the "haunted sadness" of a Negro figure resting on the foot of a French admiral's statue in Colmar (a work of Bartholdi, the sculptor of the Statue of Liberty) had since his childhood drawn Schweitzer's thoughts to the misery of the Africans. He had learned of the diseases ravaging their tribes—sleeping sickness, elephantiasis, malaria, skin afflictions of every kind—of their superstitions and their great fear, all of which made a mockery of our notions of the "happy savage."

> The parable of Dives and Lazarus seemed to have spoken directly of us! We are Dives, for, through the advances of medical science, we know a great deal about disease and pain, and have innumerable means of fighting them: yet we take as a matter of course the incalculable advantages which this new wealth gives us! Out there in the colonies, however, sits wretched Lazarus, the colored folk, who suffers from illness and pain as much as we do, nay much more, and has absolutely no means of fighting them. And just as Dives sinned against the poor man at his gate . . . so do we sin against the poor man at our gate.

For seven years Schweitzer studied medicine, and in March 1913 embarked for French Equatorial Africa with what funds he had raised by lectures, organ recitals, and the royalties

of his books, followed by the reluctant blessings of the Paris Missionary Society whose board was still somewhat apprehensive of his unorthodox exegetics.

Far from being a Tolstoiean withdrawal from the world, his purpose in leaving civilized parts was, in fact, not caused by what is commonly known as a missionary spirit, or even by Christian charity alone. What he wanted was to atone—and atone by action—for the wrong done over the centuries by his, the white, race to the Africans. Years afterwards, in his Goethe Prize Address, Schweitzer explained his decision for service in secular terms. No line divides for him the secular from the religious.

The story of the Lambaréné hospital, hewn out of the wilderness of an "antediluvian landscape," the story of Dr. Schweitzer's medical accomplishments and his Sunday services, of his Herculean labors and the vicissitudes of his life in peace and two wars, and how his days, crowded with work beyond any ordinary man's imagination, have been followed regularly by nights which up to the small hours are given to philosophical research, to writing, and his beloved organ—all this has become widely known in recent years. It may be presented as one of the great success-in-adversity stories of this century, and as the saga of a man endowed with a great mind, a matchless will power, a robust physique, and the most tender of hearts.

As such it is told very well by Mr. Hagedorn. The recipient of recent autobiographical notes from Dr. Schweitzer's own pen, he is, despite his occasionally lyrical prose, very accurate in his data. He is not always equally careful in reconstructing the thoughts of Albert Schweitzer. Among the venerable builders of civilization of whom Mr. Hagedorn makes Schweitzer think at the outbreak of the war he lists Descartes; actually, Schweitzer has accused Descartes of "having led modern philosophy astray by cutting the world into objects which have extensions and objects which think, and by going on, moreover, to refuse to each of them the power of influencing the other." ("Civilization and Ethics," p. 137).

"I am life that wills to live in the midst of life that wills to live"—this, in contradistinction to the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum*, is the point of departure of his philosophy and his "Reverence for Life." He resigns himself to the fact that the world cannot be explained. But his pessimistic knowledge does not, at the same time, prevent him from affirming: ". . . my willing and hoping are optimistic." Or, to quote Mr. Seavers:

> Reverence for Life pretends to no knowledge of the world or of what the world may mean; it formulates no "world-view." It has no love for "faith" (that is, theoretical belief); but it has faith (that is, has trust) in Love. This is its "lifeview." Not knowledge, but the will, is the true organ of spiritual understanding. "Whosoever doeth the will shall know the doctrine."

Shades of Schopenhauer, of Indian thought, of Nietzsche? Yes. But Schweitzer's conclusions are his only. And what is more, he has lived by them; and that, in our Western world, has become about as rare as a Christian who wished to follow Jesus's example, and has tried it. Schweitzer's "ethical mysticism" belongs to his life and religion as well as to his philosophy. In his "Philosophy of Civilization"—of which two volumes ("The Decay and the Restoration of Civilization" and "Civilization and Ethics") are published, with a third one to come—he refers repeatedly to the religious-ethical spirit of the much-maligned eighteenth century, that, to his mind, blended so well with the "rationalism" of that epoch.

Mr. Seavers has discharged admirably the task of presenting Albert Schweitzer and his discipleship, and of leading the layman through the various fields of his learned activities without ever losing sight of his wholeness. If Mr. Seaver's writing does not often reach the limpid simplicity of Schweitzer's own style, it yet nowhere obscures or encumbers his thoughts, and is never carried away by rhetorical enthusiasm.

The greatness of Schweitzer himself as a literary figure is, so to speak, incidentally borne out by the anthology, which Mr. Roy has prepared with the utmost care and understanding, and has furnished with a very fine introduction. Schweitzer has written both in French and in German, and sometimes he has written one and

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 234

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 234 will be found in the next issue.

LWIKXW PD LCNMDA LWD

PICAB IMDC LI VHFB LWD

ODNKLHVKA PD GKRL QNCCS

HL PHLW KR IC PD VHFB HL

FIL.—C. DGDCRIF

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 233

Nothing is so good as it seems beforehand.—G. ELIOT.

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the same book in both languages himself. He has been extremely lucky in the work of his English translators, and much of the beauty of his originals has been preserved.

Whichever of the present three books you take up—the rewarding anthology, Mr. Seaver's erudite, definitive biography, or Mr. Hagedorn's human story—you won't lay it aside without the feeling of having breathed the air of a better world; indeed, of being better yourself.

Human Geometry

THE PERSON AND THE COMMON GOOD. By Jacques Maritain. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1947. 95 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by ASHER BRYNES

THE SOCIAL philosophy of the Catholic Church is here set forth, logical and complete within the terms of its particular axioms; it resembles a Euclidean geometry of human nature. It draws a diagram of the human person which could well serve a man for his whole life, perpetually giving him new angles on it.

Professor Maritain says, in brief, that society is an "analogical idea" to the Person, which means that it ultimately exists only for the sake of the human persons within it. "Personality, as the Thomistic School rightly asserts, is the ultimate achievement by which the creative influx seals, within itself, a nature face to face with the whole order of existence."

For those who do not belong to his Church this ultimate is, so to speak, not genuinely ultimate; it is a postulate of the specifically Roman Catholic universe. "The free act of the human person is not of this world. By its liberty the human person transcends the stars." But meanwhile there is a common work to be accomplished by the social whole as such, and "the persons are subordinated to this common work." This work is often a "just war." However, being subordinated, we persons are not able to judge wars as just or unjust; so it is all wars to which we are bound.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 715)

MORRIS:
POSTCRIPT TO YESTERDAY

For one thing every American knew in his heart, though a philosopher had recorded it with wonder. "To be an American," George Santayana had told people across the Atlantic, "is of itself almost a moral condition, an education, and a career."

Fiction. *The modern novelist's preoccupation with the mystery of time, whether it is static or fluid or mysteriously another dimension, is well illustrated in the fiction reviewed this week. J. B. Priestley has used time as a major factor in novels, stories, and plays. In his new novel, "Jenny Villiers," he reverts pleasantly to a well-worn fantasy that the past is always with us, and we can at moments see it about us. The posthumous book of the philosopher and mystic Osupensky, long awaited by his devotees, is surprisingly a brief work of fiction, which attempts to prove that it is futile for man to wish to turn back the hourglass of his life. Even James Hilton's "Nothing So Strange" is concerned with time, for it becomes necessary to search into the lost past of an atomic scientist with a nervous breakdown. This week's novel voted most certain to succeed is H. E. Bates's "The Purple Plain," whose scene is a remote spot in ageless Burma where time for a moment is speeded up by the violent activity of war.*

The Egret and the Burning Plane

THE PURPLE PLAIN. By H. E. Bates. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1947. 308 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

AMONG contemporary English novelists H. E. Bates is one of the few who have mastered the art of writing popular novels that reveal the inner as well as the outer man, that display depths of emotion without pathos or sentimentality. For American readers this talent for writing fine prose that never appears stylized and descriptive passages that are often poetically graceful and colorful without appearing to be poetry, was first revealed in his romantic novel "Fair Stood the Wind for France." In "The Purple Plain" he has again returned to the war, but the scene is incredibly remote from the French countryside: a burning and arid plain in Burma, where there is a group of bombed temples, above a marble pavement littered with shattered figures of the gods, near a small airfield and a village hidden among tropical trees along a dark river. Over all, the blistering heat of the sun laden with impalpable dust scorches the small group of white men who guard the planes that are the only means of entry or escape, corrupts their natures, and fills them with a tired bitterness and hatred.

The English flyer commanding this remote outpost of fallen Empire, on whom the action of the narrative centers, is a man who had won decorations and citations for bravery in the early days of the war, though he alone knew that his heroism was false; the product of a reckless passion for death in battle. Grim and bitter, tortured by the heat and by his secret and apparently unattainable wish, he

—From the book jacket

is taken for the first time by the medical officer to the village. The doctor, a hearty and merciful man, knows that Forrester is close to a nervous breakdown or to insanity. There in the dank stillness and quiet of a thatched house he meets a Burmese girl of twenty and her older sister, both educated in Rangoon University, who had fled from the Japanese occupation. Forrester's young wife had died in London on their wedding night, killed by a German bomb, and the sight of this peaceful and gentle girl with the pallor of a magnolia blossom calms his consuming anger.

It is difficult to describe a novel of this superior quality but with a theme so commonplace as that of the British or American soldier and the native girl without giving it an appearance of triteness. Indeed the events that take place might have been invented by any writer who knew something of the course of the war in Burma, had felt the burning heat, and had experienced that sympathy that sometimes springs up in the Westerner's heart at the first glimpse of what may

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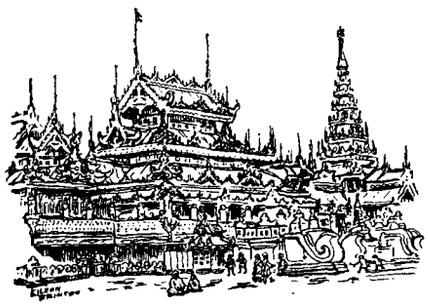
lie beneath the fragile beauty and grace of the cultured Oriental woman. This is a romance of action and suspense; it is not unduly contemplative nor sensuous, and the excitement it provides the reader is familiar enough to most war novels, the airplane crash that burns two men to death, the Japanese bombing raid on the village, the smashup that lands Forrester and two wounded companions in the interminable reaches of a stony plain riven by dry watercourses, the almost miraculous escape and return to the girl who has become all of life to him—all of these are in a sense part of the conventions of war fiction in which the scene is laid in Asia.

It is Mr. Bates's gift for creating flesh-and-blood characters, his evocation of the nuances of human behavior and feeling through accurate speech, his sharp sense for color and form and telling imagery, that set this book apart from other war novels.

The four white men who have a part to play in the novel—Blore, rotund and irritatingly meticulous, the cheerful doctor, Carrington, the sensitive and courageous flyer whom Forrester carries on his back away from certain death—are all sharply delineated, as are the two sturdy women nurses who profess to hate all the men around them and the missionary with her dyed red hair and her shrill laughter edged with hysteria. He



seems to have a special quality of tenderness and feeling for the pallid and fragile natives who had been the victims of Japanese ambition and are now passively enduring a second foreign occupation, their town bombed and ruined, their pagodas shattered. In time they know that they will be left alone, that the current of life will flow as it always has, but now there is hidden fear that may send them at any time wandering with their household goods and their babies toward starvation and death. From the beginning of the story there is this secret apprehension, a sustained suspense at the heart of the novel. The native's passive fear, Carrington's special regard for death, the dangerous and arid landscape over which he must fly, give the reader a sense of constant danger in violent contrast to the static tranquility of jungle and desert plain and blazing heat.

The final third of the narrative is taken up with the crash of Forrester's plane, his trorturous escape through jagged rocks and jungle, carrying and supporting his younger, wounded companion. At the last inch of exhaustion, when all he wanted was to lie in darkness and to die, there comes the discovery that he will live. The stirring moment, which might have been banal enough, is given both beauty and force by the author's use of imagery. In the first chapter of the book he had watched a native girl child torturing a green and vibrant lizard and finally killing it, and then dusting the feel of death from her rosy hands. Now at the end of his life he sees a lizard running among the dry acacia twigs onto a flat rock a few yards in front of him. As he opens his eyes it dies protectively, eyes wonderfully bright, and tiny hands outstretched on the flat face of the rock.

> But down in the valley he could see something that even beside the wonder of the bright living lizard was like a mirage. A white egret was walking daintily among the tall grass of the jungle. The thought of seeing a bird was so crazily wonderful that he staggered to his feet. And the egret as if disturbed by the sound he made seemed suddenly to fly. Then he saw it was not an egret. He saw it was a small column of smoke. He saw it rising pearl gray as the feathers of an egret from a dry ring of grass. Beyond the fire was a narrow dust-white road and between the road and the little fire he suddenly saw the movement of men.

When he had finally been carried back to the little shaded village where his Anna lived, the missionary woman told him at the door of the house that she was sleeping from the exhaustion of grief. "Go in and lie down and sleep with her," she said. "Nothing will be said in this house about that sort of sleep together."

It is a remarkable writer who can illuminate the darkest moments and arouse the reader's emotions by describing a lizard, an egret that turns into a column of smoke, and by two sentences spoken by a haggard and ravaged woman with hideously red-dyed hair. But H. E. Bates has had a long experience dealing with crucial situations and with nature as an adjunct to man's deepest emotions. He has published besides his novels a half dozen books of original short stories, and two on English country life. He is that rare author whose work can be cut and chopped into sections and serialized in the most popular magazines without loss to his prestige and without a sentence altered. Now that the war is fading into the past he may be able to devote his talent for narrative and for descriptive passages of enameled elegance and beauty to the years of our qualified peace.

THE AUTHOR: Herbert Ernest Bates began his literary career at seventeen as an apprentice reporter on an English country newspaper but soon quit to clerk in a leather warehouse. It gave him more time for creative writing. His first novel, "The Two Sisters," was published in 1926, when he was twenty-one. Within ten years he produced ten books, most of them collections of the short stories which won him kudos as the "most talented and articulate" young author in that category, and certainly the most frequently anthologized in Edward J. O'Brien's annual "Best British Short Stories." He has also written reviews and articles for most London newspapers, essays, a few plays, two volumes on English rural life, and several novels. Although devoid of "proletarian" slant, his works deal chiefly with simple country people and agricultural laborers. His best-known books here are "Spella Ho," "The Cruise of the Breadwinner," and "Fair Stood the Wind for France." The last-named, like the fiction pieces in "There's Something in the Air" (written under the pseudonym "Flying Officer X") and next month's Literary Guild selection "The Purple Plain," drew upon his experience as RAF Squadron Leader in World War II. It was his first novel to be passed by censor detailing French underground activities behind German lines. During hostilities the British Ministry of Information made numerous movies of his short stories. Currently being filmed is his long short story "The Bride Came to Evansford." Mr. Bates is credited with "an exceptional talent for worry," was born in Rushton, Northampton, lives now in Little Chart, Kent, with his wife, two sons, and two daughters. He writes mornings in (quoting friends) "the worst longhand in the world." His favorite recreations are gardening and, "like all English at this moment in history, eating and drinking."—R. G.

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The Ouspensky Mystery

STRANGE LIFE OF IVAN OSOKIN. By P. D. Ouspensky. New York: Holme Press. 1947. 166 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by AARON SUSSMAN

THERE are many strange things about the "Strange Life of Ivan Osokin," but none stranger than the story of the author and the history of his previous books, to which this one, because of the author's death on October 4, has become the final and culminating statement.

How many readers of *The Saturday Review* will remember the excitement created in 1920 by Claude Bragdon's sponsorship and publication of "Tertium Organum" (the third canon of thought, according to the author, in the series which includes Aristotle's "Organon" and Bacon's "Novum Organum")? Or how this "key to the enigmas of the world" began to sell so well that it had to be turned over to Alfred A. Knopf because Bragdon's intimate but inadequate Manas Press was overwhelmed by the demand. Or how, after a wild search by many people, Peter Demianovich Ouspensky was found in Constantinople, one of 150,000 refugees from the Russian Revolution, and was finally brought safely to England. There he completed "A New Model of the Universe," which was published in 1931 by Knopf.

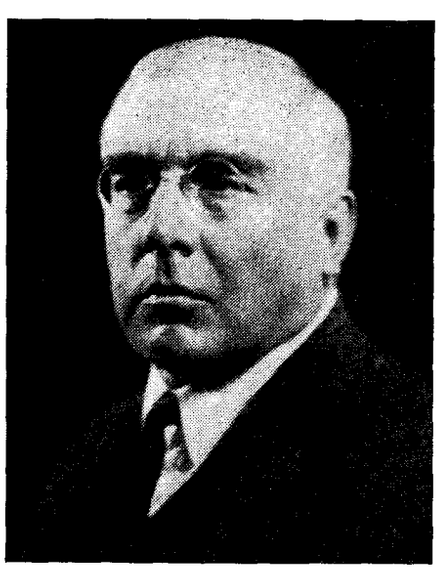
Since then there has been much speculation about Ouspensky's fourth book (his first, "The Fourth Dimension," appeared in 1909). He promised to release it only when the world was ready for it. Silent years passed, another world war exploded, but nothing more was heard from Ouspensky. This sixteen-year silence was like a punishment. Those of us who treasured his other books, waited impatiently for, and wondered about, the publication of his next. It was an ineffable surprise, therefore, to run across a two-page advertisement in *Publishers Weekly* announcing "Ivan Osokin." Out of curiosity, I phoned the editorial department of Knopf to find out why *they* weren't publishing the book, since they had issued Ouspensky's previous titles. It hadn't been offered to them, they said; and since no one had expected a novel from Ouspensky, no provisions for it had been written into the original contract.

"Strange Life of Ivan Osokin" (with the article deliberately omitted) is not the book by Ouspensky that his readers have been expecting. For one thing, it is fiction . . . written in somewhat the style of a screen play. And it is quite short, running to only 166 pages. But begin to read it, and you suddenly become aware that this may be the book that Ouspensky promised, after all. He is talking to those of us who are still searching for the answers he found. He is warning us about something. He is telling us about some dangerous secrets that he has discovered. Why fiction? Because he wanted to reach the largest possible public. It would be ironic if this very fact kept the book from finding its inevitable audience quickly.

Have you ever said or thought, "If only I could relive my life!"? Have you ever wondered about what you would do, and what might happen, if you had the power to set your life's clock back? Here it all is, thoroughly explored, in the pages of a remarkable book.

The "Strange Life of Ivan Osokin" is the story of a love-sick, unhappy young man who realizes that he has messed up his life and would like to end it, or try again. He knows that that's impossible, but he visits an old friend, a magician, and they talk. Ivan feels that things would be different, quite different, if only he could live his life over, yet remember everything that had happened before. The magician admits that this might be arranged, but denies that it would alter anything since "people always repeat the same mistakes." Ivan insists, so the magician finally sends him back twelve years in time, to his school days, when he first meets the girl he loves. The rest is the story of what happens and what Osokin learns. It wouldn't be fair to reveal any more of the surprising plot.

There is a great deal of occult wisdom in this book . . . the kind of hidden wisdom that bewilders at first, then slowly illuminates and reveals.



—*Everleigh.*

P. D. Ouspensky "is telling us about some dangerous secrets that he has discovered."

The great secrets guessed by Ivan Osokin, and through him by the reader, are not safe secrets, the author warns us. They must be used or they will turn against you. But they are worth that risk. We live to learn these things; most of us die before we do learn them. Can anyone who has read to any extent in the literature of the ancient East fail to understand the terrible and wonderful promise in what the magician tells Osokin:

> A man can be given only what he can use; and he can use only that for which he has sacrificed something. This is the law of human nature. So if a man wants to get help to acquire important knowledge or new powers, he must sacrifice other things important to him at the moment.

I'd like to quote one other paragraph which has become strangely significant in view of the author's recent death at the age of sixty-nine:

> Nothing dies. Everything exists forever. It is we who go away from it, lose sight of it. Yesterday exists. . . . But there is a mystery about it; this mystery we call death. Yet in truth death is simply our failure to understand something. I feel this now. Why can it not always be felt? Then we should fear nothing."

Thespis Immortal

JENNY VILLIERS. By J. B. Priestley. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 184 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by
CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN

MR. PRIESTLEY, novelist, playwright, politician, and sightseer, is pleased once again to turn his attention to time. The past and the present, the remote control of centuries have previously concerned him, though this purpose has often been obscure and his manipulation cumbersome. Not so in "Jenny Villiers." Here is a direct, loving tribute to the everlasting glory of the theatre. Purely and simply, it is for the stagestruck who must or should be legion.

This is the case of the tired, bitter, renowned playwright, Martin Cheveril, convinced the theatre is dead. The tale is set in the Green Room of an ancient English provincial theatre while what the author claims to be his swan song is in rehearsal below. In several hours his viewpoint changes. He engages the young actress he formerly refused to see; he plans future productions; and he even agrees to rewrite his own third act. Beyond question he has seen a vision in that ghost-ridden room.

Resting, having taken four rather

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than only two of the doctor's pills, Cheveril clearly sees young Jenny Villiers whose glove and picture he noticed in the Green Room's cabinet. In this very room she rehearses in the year 1846. She triumphs—here loves, dies, and finally gets her message across the hundred years. This has all happened before. Old actors have bemoaned the passing of the great days. The theatre has been dying since Dionysius, but it is reborn by those who keep "the flame burning clear." Jenny's spirit goes on.

Mr. Priestley's thesis is far from new, but his treatment of it is charming. The reconstruction of the past, willingly blended with the present, makes for a soothing sense of timelessness. His room is rife with atmosphere as strongly felt as is the essence of the theatre. Magic belongs to this world, and Mr. Priestley has captured it.

Not for one moment did Cheveril dream or succumb to sedatives. Time may prove as vulnerable as space. There is progressively less room in the world for disbelief. Let us, therefore, view the mists with an open mind. Mr. Priestley lightens the shades enchantingly.

Atomic Romance

NOTHING SO STRANGE. By James Hilton. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1947. 368 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

MR. HILTON is back to tell us about a young American mathematician, recently engaged in atomic research, who believes that he is being pursued by something or other, and who suffers from a bad conscience. This young man, in his simple and melodramatic way, might almost be called a typically modern figure: for surely never in all the history of mankind have men and women heard at their backs, as clearly as they do today, the hurrying of Time's wingéd chariot. And modern man, at least in America, would appear to be suffering from a bad conscience. I wish I could go on to say that Mr. Hilton's novel is a good one. As an attempt to translate into the vernacular certain mysteries of science and of conscience which touch us all very nearly, it is a curiosity: but that is all it is, and it is not very much of that.

For Mr. Hilton, though endowed with enviable narrative gifts, has at last become the victim of a form of myopia not uncommon among successful novelists—that is to say, he

(*Continued on page* 30)

U.S.A. *The world has always been curious about the United States, a brave, fledgling country in its beginnings, deliberately founded on the tenets of reason and dedicated to human rights. Europeans came to its shores to see what made it tick and to write down their findings. And that curiosity has never abated. Americans themselves through the years have been keenly aware of their special heritage. Hamlin's "Land of Liberty" is close in spirit to Frank Kingdon's latest volume, "Architects of the Republic." Cecil Roberts, the perennial visiting Englishman, puts us down on paper in "And So to America." And English-educated Herman Finer, author of last year's "The Road to Reaction," now teaching at the University of Chicago, combines a background of Fabian socialism with American democracy to give us his idea of "America's Destiny."*

Beneath Dollar Redemption

AMERICA'S DESTINY. By Herman Finer. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 407 pp. $5.

Reviewed by ASHER BRYNES

THE theme of "America's Destiny" is, to paraphrase Christopher Marlowe's Faust (an academic magician who moved about a great deal to get away from the devil), that Europe is in hell nor are we out of it. We are approximately in the same place; and we will be actually there if we do not dredge out Europe. Europe cannot help itself, must indeed abandon all hope, together with every other country of the world and the masses of the Russian people who are not members of the aggressive, despotic, brutal Communist machine—should we fail to recognize our historic destiny. Civilization has been jigsawed, says Dr. Finer, "in such a way as to leave an empty space which can be filled by America alone."

As the story is told here, our destiny is a pretty shrill business. "Don't kid yourself," cries Dr. Finer, "that you are not to blame for contributory negligence!" An American might respond, mildly, that only yesterday we sent forth millions of armed men together with thousands of shiploads of Lend-Lease to maintain as well as to participate in a war that began in Europe, and which would would otherwise have been lost in Europe; that when we withdrew after the victory we left behind hundreds of thousands of American dead as well as some billion of dollars' worth of American commodities; and that right now, upon receipt of news that Europe has eaten up the Lend-Lease, we are actively preparing to dispatch more billions under such polite labels as "Marshall Plan," "grants-in-aid," "European Recovery Program." Why, he might say, we have so refined the crassness out of our dollar diplomacy that we *lend* only millions; our main effort in this second post-war world is to *give away* billions.

The author of "America's Destiny" believes that these are steps in the right direction, but they are not enough. As Europe was once above salvation by mere money (only its degenerate noblemen married American heiresses, only its impecunious artists sold pictures to American dealers, only its neglected scholars solicited grants from American learned foundations) so now Europe is morally beneath redemption by the almighty dollar. "It is vain to believe that [American] responsibilities can be satisfied by occasional gifts or loans of money, however generous." *Know thyself!* pleads Dr. Finer—meaning, in brief, that what is wrong with us, the people of America, is exactly what is wrong with them, the people of Europe; we are all playing power politics and the evils of our time are collectively our fault.

> It is no use to blame the [politicians] for a harsh world! They merely transmit the power which emanates from the people. As soon as the nations stop giving their representatives the impression that this is how they want the world conducted, these gentlemen will be able to satisfy their oft-reiterated longing to retire from arduous and nasty duties.

It's no serious matter, perhaps, that Dr. Finer should deny his own quotations from the poets—there is a tag prefixed to each of the twelve chapters which he manages to violate seriatim —but if we cannot make use of the time-honored American practice of throwing out the rascals in office when even they complain of the stench what are we to do? The answer is a long story with a moral ending: we must, while aiding Europe, uplift ourselves.

To this task America alone can sup-

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ply "the relatively best conscience and the strongest force." America can do so because she has a political system *founded on* the principle that "governments may arise and adopt and enforce policies only if they are based on the consent of the people." Unfortunately, "America is today morally and institutionally unready to take out the marshal's baton from her knapsack where it has lain since 1776."

The author's call to action is based, therefore, on the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence; specifically on the first part of it containing the moral grounds upon which the American Revolutionists based their action against Great Britain. Now the *self-evident truths* of the Declaration are, as Dr. Finer seems to understand in another context, rights against the state, against government; they are, in the considered verdict of a recent (1943) Supreme Court decision, "fundamental rights which may not be submitted to vote; they depend on the outcome of no elections"; they are human rights as opposed to majority rights and the plain meaning of them is that if they should be denied by the majority that majority would be wrong. The voice of the people is, on such conditions and only when it conforms to them, but not otherwise, the voice of God.

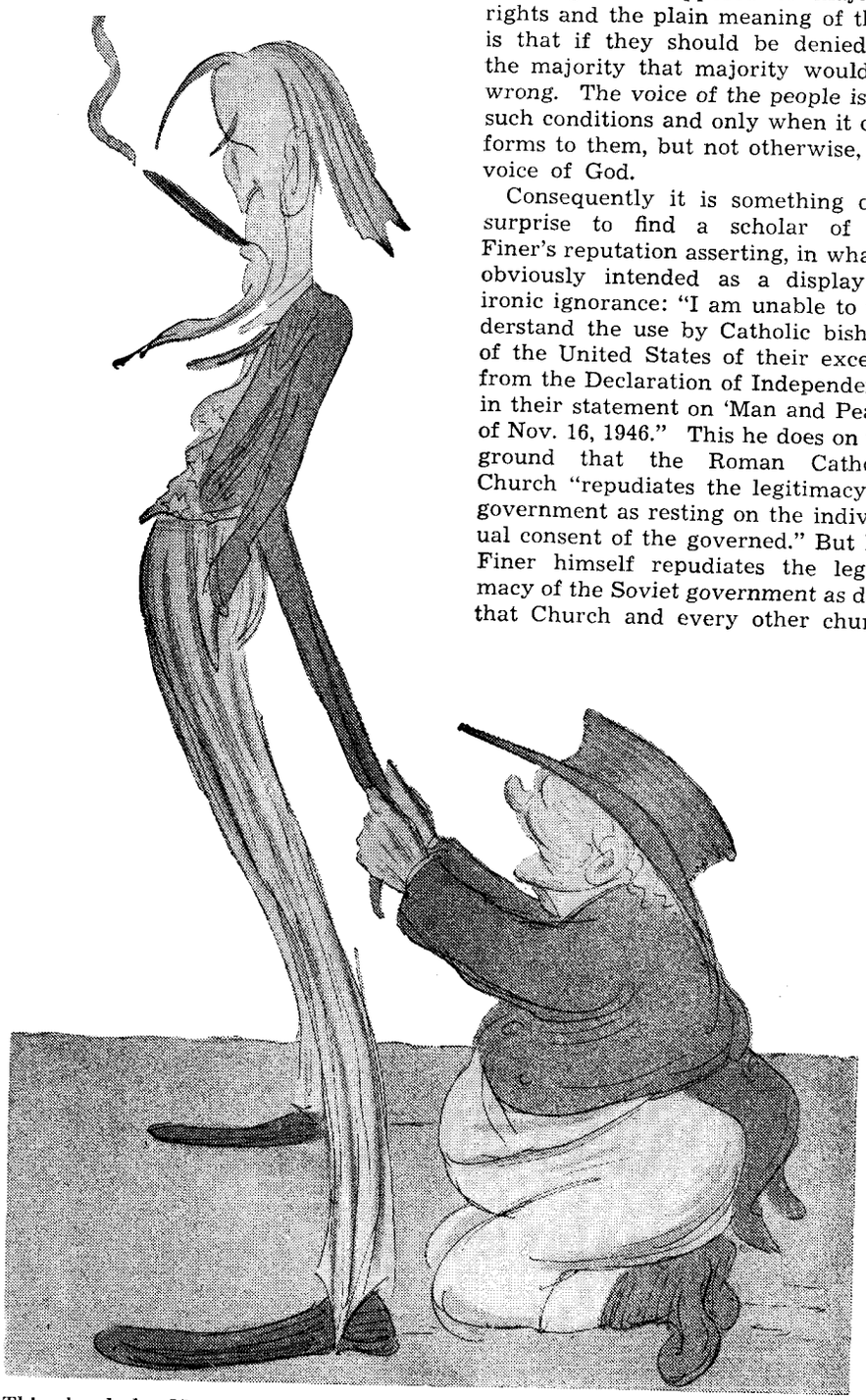
Consequently it is something of a surprise to find a scholar of Dr. Finer's reputation asserting, in what is obviously intended as a display of ironic ignorance: "I am unable to understand the use by Catholic bishops of the United States of their excerpt from the Declaration of Independence in their statement on 'Man and Peace' of Nov. 16, 1946." This he does on the ground that the Roman Catholic Church "repudiates the legitimacy of government as resting on the individual consent of the governed." But Dr. Finer himself repudiates the legitimacy of the Soviet government as does that Church and every other church except the tamed Muscovite (or satellite) orthodoxy, although the Communists are supported by overwhelming plebiscites like Hitler's government, Mussolini's government, Tojo's government, and in the more distant past Napoleon's government. Dr. Finer repudiates them on identical grounds. This awful confusion is compounded by a statement that the clearest expression of the rights of the person before the United Nations was made by the delegate from Lebanon, a country in which Catholic influence is paramount.

We also find it difficult to understand Dr. Finer, and this question is not asked in any ironical spirit. With what kind of baton, exactly, does he want us to beat the Soviet Union? The stick that he borrows from us to cudgel a peaceful minority of our people as well as the Communists, and which he refuses to return unless we recognize what he affirms in topsy-turvy language? "The world does *not* owe the United States a living," says Dr. Finer sardonically; and for once we'll take him straight and draw our own conclusions.

It is doubtful whether we can owe anything whatever on the word of one who approves of Hitler's declaration to President Roosevelt in 1939: "All peoples ought to have an equal share of the goods of this world. It ought not to happen that one people needs so much. . ." (see the fantastic section entitled "America's Special Obligation," pp. 376-382);—of one who uses the Hitler trick of disposing of an opponent's argument on the ground that he is of the Jewish "race" (see remarks on William B. Ziff, p. 185);—of one who blames us for throttling reciprocal free trade when his own country almost choked the modest beginnings of it—a purely American initiative—to death at the post-war tariff convention in Switzerland a few weeks ago;—of one who describes democracy as the kind of government in which coercion is used last instead of, as in dictatorships, first (see the concluding remarks on pp. 400-401).

The publicity which accompanies Dr. Finer's book says that he "knows the men who are now ruling England better than almost anyone in this country." It says that "many members of the present Labor Government in Great Britain were once his professorial colleagues, his students, or fellow-students." It says that when he tells us it is our destiny "to assume the position in world politics that was formerly held by England, his statement has unique significance."

So it has indeed. His country (England) is in peril. His creed (socialism) is on trial. His party (the British Labor Party) is sinking. And he is now holding a job here.



This sketch by Max Beerbohm appeared originally in the cartoon book "Second Childhood of John Bull," published in 1901 by Stephen Swift & Co. of England. The undercaption read: "To Brother Jonathan. *J. B.* 'O, Sir, please, Sir, *do* let us young Hanglo Saxons stand shoulder to shoulder agin the world. Think of our common tongue. Think of that there Mayflower. O, Sir, ain't blood thicker than water?' etc. etc. (B. J. guesses the Atlantic is not com-posed of blood.)"

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U.S.A.

And So Home

AND SO TO AMERICA. By Cecil Roberts. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 538 pp. $5.

Reviewed by JOHN T. WINTERICH

MR. ROBERTS's publishers list, opposite the title page of "And So to America," the names of twenty-seven books he has written. As Mr. Roberts is not yet fifty-four years old, this average output of better than one book every two years, with no deductions for infancy and adolescence, reasonably stamps him as a prolific writer. Add to this the fact that he was for three years literary editor of the *Liverpool Post* and for five years editor of the *Nottingham Journal*, and, during the First World War, a correspondent with the Dover Patrol, the Grand Fleet, and the British armies on the Western Front and on the march to the Rhine, and his prolificness moves up a couple of notches. Add further the fact that "Who's Who" (admittedly a rather out-of-date issue) lists some thirteen book titles (seven of them verse) which his American publishers omit mentioning, perhaps for lack of space, and Mr. Roberts begins to take rank as a latter-day Dumas. Speaking, too, is English composition, and Mr. Roberts made lecture tours here in 1920, 1924, 1926, and 1929. In 1939 he came again and appeared on platforms in every state, thereby running his wordage up into incalculable millions.

"And So to America" is the fruit of these journeys, particularly the last. Mr. Roberts may well believe, as he says on page 28, that he "knew the United States well," but this familiarity takes on qualification in the mind of the American reader.

Mr. Roberts covered a lot of ground. He rode on the front seat of a Chicago-New York truck for five days; he traveled in buses, lunched at milk bars, explored bowling alleys, "canvassed the whole gamut of civil life from bankers to barbers, store presidents to redcap porters," and wisely concludes that "one must get off the main lines to find the heart of a country." He also saw quite a lot of the quality. He went to the "cool summer home" of the Pagets in New Hampshire, and there on the wall were "engravings of Field Marshal the Marquess of Anglesey, my host's great-grandfather." Know who he was?

> Anglesey succeeded Lord Wellesley as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Tall, courteous, impetuous but shrewd, he married twice. His first wife was the daughter of the Earl of Jersey, by whom he had three sons and five daughters. He was divorced and then married the divorced wife of Henry Wellesley, Baron Cowley, the brother of the Duke, and of the Marquess Wellesley who had married Mrs. Robert Patterson of Baltimore. Anglesey's second wife, by whom he had three sons and three daughters, was Charlotte Sloan, daughter of the first Earl of Cadogan.

—Drawing by E. P. Korn.

"Cecil Roberts is writing, palpably, for a British audience."

Mr. Roberts goes to Boston, where "the City Hall is the domain of the Irish, the State House that of the Yankee bluebloods. . . . The Adams breed is still strong—for a descendant of John Adams and John Quincy Adams"—and John Quincy Adams is snatched away from Boston and popped into a footnote:

> He was married in 1797 in All Hallows Church, Barking, London, one of the most complete medieval churches, dating back to the tenth century. It survived the Great Fire of 1666, when Samuel Pepys saw the blaze quenched in the church porch, but it was utterly demolished in the bombings of December 1940. William Penn was baptised in this church in 1664. Americans have subscribed towards the rebuilding.

Mr. Roberts is writing, palpably, for a British audience, and his book is of interest to an American audience only as an example of how this is done; *e.g.*: "We are in Alabama, but only just, for Mobile, pronounced like the last two syllables of 'automobile' and not like 'La Donna è Mobile,' is on a tongue of land," etc. But for neither an American nor a British audience should Mr. Roberts permit such lapses as these:

> One was proceeding to Harvard University to take up a lectureship on his studies of basic English, and where later Churchill himself was to launch forth on a eulogy of that doomed attempt to emasculate our great English heritage.

> Born in the purple, the noble swaddling clothes had some flaws.

The Hero Theme

LAND OF LIBERTY. By Fred Hamlin. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1947. 335 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND WALTERS, JR.

FRED HAMLIN is a veteran newspaperman with a deep faith in democracy and the common man. Both democracy and the common man have had a rough time of it in America, he believes, because democracy means progress, progress means change, and change is always opposed by those in power.

This theme Mr. Hamlin develops in "Land of Liberty," a volume he calls "an informal history of the common people and their heroes." Among impressionistic and panoramic descriptions of the way Americans worked and played, courted and bickered, raised families and grew old, from the age of the Puritan to the era of the New Deal, Mr. Hamlin intersperses accounts of the careers of a dozen men, including Nathaniel Bacon, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin Roosevelt.

Much of Mr. Hamlin's style, like much of his philosophy, is inspired by those two other bards of democracy, Walt Whitman and Carl Sandburg. The result is a long prose poem, a rolling and frequently singing restatement of a legend dear to the hearts of most Americans.

But Mr. Hamlin offers his book not as a poem, but as a serious work of history. Unhappily, he has not subjected his efforts to the exacting discipline which history demands. Many of his pages are studded with minor errors of fact: he gives individuals the wrong first names, events the wrong dates. More fundamental is his failure to define his terms clearly.

His key figure, the "common man," remains a hazy, even mystical creature who often embodies the middle-class virtues, yet often reviles them. Nor does Mr. Hamlin seem to have any precise standards in mind as he selects his "heroes." Some, as in the cases of Jackson and Lincoln, are true folk-heroes. Some, like Cotton Mather, despise the common man. Some, like Huey Long, deliberately betray him. Others, like Priddy Meeks, the indefatigable pioneer, and Harry Reichenbach, the demon publicity man, are really not heroes in any sense, but merely representatives of notable American types.

In his desire to develop his thesis forcefully, Mr. Hamlin has sometimes oversimplified complex facts, as when he intimates that the common man

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everywhere was in favor of American independence, while the upper class universally was opposed. Sometimes he forces his "heroes" into a preconceived pattern, as when he portrays Jefferson as a democrat in the present-day sense of that loosely used word.

It is unfortunate that before undertaking to interpret the American past Mr. Hamlin did not prepare himself more adequately for the task. His bibliography lists approximately 160 titles. Internal evidence suggests that this represents the sum total of his reading in Americana. The majority of the works are the third- or fourth-best on their particular subject. Many important aspects of our social life are neglected completely. If Mr. Hamlin had read a standard work on the colonial period like that by Curtis Nettels, for example, he certainly would not have written: "Woman suffrage . . . had been common in the colonies." Particularly regrettable is Mr. Hamlin's apparent innocence of the existence of Dixon Wecter's "The Hero in America," a volume which treated the same theme, but with a precision, judiciousness, and learning that are notably absent in "Land of Liberty."

The Civil War—Off the Record

THE AMERICAN ILIAD. The Epic Story of the Civil War as Narrated by Eyewitnesses and Contemporaries. By Otto Eisenschiml and Ralph Newman. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1947. 720 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by
BRIGADIER GENERAL DONALD ARMSTRONG

BY THE very nature of their undertaking, the compilers of this history—they specifically deny authorship—have accomplished a needed corrective to the Civil War story. Too frequently the chronicles of this war have omitted the essential. As between arms and the man, the historian has chosen to concentrate on the former. Often the history books are adequate for strategy, tactics, and weapons, but they have overlooked the fact that in war also the proper study of mankind is man. The human element determines the outcome of war. The significance of this magnificent panorama of the American Civil War is its preoccupation with the human interest, with morale, and with the material and spiritual forces at the front and at home that make or break morale.

This does not mean that strategy and tactics are neglected. On the contrary, Otto Eisenschiml and Ralph Newman have brought out most effectively the reasons why armies moved where they did and why they attacked or defended on the battlefield and the effect on combat of the technology of those days.

The novelty of this book lies in its original method of presenting history. While the Civil War was piling up battle after battle from Fort Sumter to Appomattox and long afterwards, the pen rivaled the sword in ceaseless activity. Generals explained their victories or apologized for their defeats. Private soldiers confided to their personal records their opinions of the generals and the Civil War G.I. view of combat. A host of other observers and participants remembered what they saw and felt in the bitter and bloody ordeal on land and sea. Some of these memoirs, diaries, letters, etc., are well known. Others have remained obscure, known only to the specialist on Civil War history. Invariably these unofficial records of the war between the States had life and flavor that can rarely be recaptured in the retelling. The authors have selected wisely and well from the rich store of contemporary writings to make a smooth, connected narrative that is more exciting and more authentic than any novel. Even the profound student of the war will find new aspects and many episodes and anecdotes that will add to his understanding of the epic struggle. The book deserves its title. In spite of a few omissions, it accomplishes what might have seemed impossible—another and decidedly different history of our Civil War that merits top place in the military annals of that period. It might be expected that a story depending on the synthesis of scores of individual writings with brief but lucid connecting comments by the authors would suffer from such an approach. In effect the result is quite different. Jumping for example from General McClellan's castigation of the Secretary of War during the Peninsular campaign to Private Polley of Texas on the other side of the battlefield is a fascinating experience in dramatic contrasts.

Messrs. Eisenschiml and Newman have admirably accomplished their purpose of giving the reader a comprehensive and well-balanced narrative of the military and naval adventures of the American Civil War in the words of eyewitnesses and contemporaries.

—*From "The American Past."*

The 1864 election made "Long Abe" look longer than ever in *Harper's Weekly.*

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The Saturday Review of Literature

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A Plaster on a Wound?

THE SUCCESS of novels dealing with racial prejudice in this country, both through critical recognition of their merit and through the less academic standard of the cash-register, is a phenomenon worth thinking about. It may mean nothing more than that the theme itself, with its accompanying bloodshed and cruel injustice, can be dramatic and can therefore be read with absorption by men and women not a hair of whose head is stirred or a preconceived opinion altered. It may mean that acceptance of Arthur Miller's "Focus," Lillian Smith's "Strange Fruit," and two recent best sellers, Sinclair Lewis's "Kingsblood Royal" and Laura Hobson's "Gentleman's Agreement," to mention only a few titles, has far more significance than that their authors have taken an old theme and clothed it in modern dress. It may mean that the conscience of America is awakening and that something at last will be done about it.

It is a long step from the novelists' use of the theme of racial discrimination to its acceptance by major motion-picture companies. This uncomfortable subject is a by-product of "Crossfire," the first picture of the sort to be produced, but it forms the sum and substance of "Gentleman's Agreement," which has only recently come to the motion-picture houses of the country. The picture is astonishingly faithful to Mrs. Hobson's text; there are none of the often annoying departures from plot and meaning that have marred the screen versions of so many serious novels, of which the happy ending riveted on the end of Charles Jackson's "The Lost Weekend" is a mild if infuriating example. Here for everyone to see are the little meannesses, the grosser injustices that afflict the Jews living in America, the insulting words and epithets applied to them, the discrimination against them in hotels and apartments and whole communities, the difficulties they encounter in entering educational institutions and professions, and their exclusion from positions in offices and factories.

The book itself has already exerted its leavening influence; its dramatization may do a great work for good in our world. It will stir the consciences of people who have never seriously contemplated their own behavior or thoughts but have accepted the malicious clichés invented by snobbery and malice as a part of daily life, so that it will make millions of people ashamed of uttering the banalities and the poisoned words of racial prejudice. It will not cure the evil, but it may be the discovery of an anti-toxin against it, a means by which the thoughtless and normally good-natured man and woman (and that describes the average human being) may have certain words stricken from their vocabulary and certain conceptions blasted from their minds.

No one can doubt that the novel is, or that it can be, one of the most powerful means of bringing about mental and emotional revolutions. It dramatizes and gives meaning and point to evils that have endured for so long that their very nature has been forgotten or neglected. It is futile to appeal to the intellect, to discuss anti-Semitism from the platform or in solemn books which are read by people who mentally agree with every sentence, and yet who continue to behave according to the old pattern. The appeal must be made to man's heart, to his conscience, and to his instinctive sense of justice in a way that only the novel and the drama can achieve, for there a man can see himself mirrored on the printed page or on the screen. The success of "Gentleman's Agreement" was not due to the fact that it was a tract in novel form, or that the time was ripe for another novel about anti-Semitism. If the action took place in the slums of any great cities, it would not, however eloquent or dramatic, have sold its hundreds of thousands of copies or have been adapted for enormous audiences in the threatre across the land. The average man does not want to identify himself with the poverty-stricken and the hopeless, but he may be willing to find his own likeness in the socially acceptable milieu of comfortable or luxurious apartments, magnificent offices and the opulent suburbs, in the midst of which Mrs. Hobson has presented the grim spectre of hatred and prejudice, like skeletons at a banquet. Sinclair Lewis has used the same device in "Kingsblood Royal," where the man who discovers that he is part Negro is a successful banker and a white, Protestant American.

THE SOURCES and the roots of anti-Semitism are too deep, too widespread to be obliterated by a coat of white paint. The story that "Gentleman's Agreement" tells is of our day. It is a plaster on a wound, not a cure. For the truth is that most Jews want and should want to be considered as Jews and the rest of us should not be willing to have the special qualities that this astonishing people have brought to our civilization merged and lost. The whole wretched and horrible history of Jewish agony everywhere belongs to the centuries. It casts the red glow of its pogroms through the Middle Ages, through what we call the Dark Ages, back to ancient Rome itself. Its embers are smoldering now in Britain and are said to be alive in Russia. What ferment was there in this small and poor group of men and women from an arid land, whose blood has been diluted by migration and centuries of intermarriage, that makes the Jew a burning problem in America today?

If there is an answer to this age-old dilemma, it may solve other racial problems. Perhaps it is not only due to the innate superiority, as we have often suspected, of this cultured, ancient, and passionately believing people over the unthinking masses of mankind. Perhaps it is only that the Jew has become the universal scapegoat, and because it is a human failing to hate and wish to obliterate the memory of men you have injured. The man burned at the stake, or crucified, should stay dead. The Jew whose creative gifts, whose ambitions are thwarted may suffer a worse fate than the fires of any auto-da-fé. It is man's intolerance to man that is the problem. The Jewish people are the world symbol of this evil that is tearing civilization apart. They cannot be wholly innocent or always the victim; some pride or arrogance of race must have created this symbol, preserved it through the centuries, for there is no greater arrogance than that of the persecuted man, conscious of his superiority and ancient lineage, over the barbarians. This is then the problem. The arrogant Gentile is at fault. His mouth must be closed. But the Jew, when his ancient antagonist's hate is silenced, must display a magnanimity rare in this world and of which only the seed of Abraham might be capable.

H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Bearded Lady of Shalott"—Huh!

SIR: I just noticed in your review of "Mona Lisa's Mustache" [*SRL* Nov. 22] that your reviewer says "There is an unbecoming coyness in such writing that refers to Rossetti as "a bearded lady of Shalott—!" What is even more unbecoming in what is supposedly a review of a book which the reviewer is supposed to have read is that it was William Morris, not Rossetti, that was referred to as the bearded lady of Shalott.

Your reviewer suggests I should read "Poor Splendid Wings" to understand the pre-Raphaelites. May I suggest it would be becoming to a reviewer to read more carefully "Mona Lisa's Mustache" to understand modern art?

T. H. ROBSJOHN-GIBBINGS.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Please extend my apologies to Mr. Robsjohn-Gibbings for not knowing one pre-Raphaelite beard from another in his book, and, moreover, my attributing to Rosetti the coy statement Mr. Robsjohn-Gibbings intended for William Morris.

I deeply regret that this oversight should in any way suggest to the author that I was being careless in my critical approach to his work. The very brashness of the opinions predicated in the book led this reviewer to consult several volumes on the pre-Raphaelites and modern schools of art, if only to find where the author had gone "off the beam" and, if possible—*why*?

Mr. Robsjohn-Gibbings is perfectly justified in pointing out where this reviewer has erred. But permit me to say, for the record, that splitting hairs, or pre-Raphaelite beards as the author seems to be doing here, does not by any means alter the unbecoming coyness of his writing or make one feel any more kindly disposed toward his flippant dismissal of modern art and its exponents.

RICHARD MCLAUGHLIN.

Metuchen, N. J.

Wronged with Weasel Words

SIR: As "a little-schooled Marine officer"—to use Raymond Swing's patronizing phrase—I hope that I may be the first but by no means the last to protest the tone and misleading character of his review of the Evans Carlson biography [*SRL* Oct. 11].

Mr. Swing, like Michael Blankfort, author of the Carlson biography, creates an inaccurate and unfriendly atmosphere when he touches on the Marine Corps, but always saves himself from literal falsification by what President Wilson used to describe as "weasel words." For example: Mr. Swing states that General Carlson's funeral "was managed almost as though by stealth." If the Arlington funeral of a Marine general officer, attended by a provisional regiment of Marines and sailors, the United States Marine Band, and the firing of minute-guns, can be considered "stealthy," I wish I could ascertain Mr. Swing's definition of ostentation.

Mr. Swing states, "Undoubtedly the interest of the White House was responsible for the opportunity to organize the raiders in the first place." This is not true, either. The 1st Marine Raider Battalion was organized by (now) Major General Merritt A. Edson, USMC (ret.), as a result of intra-Marine Corps developmental work which had been going on since 1939. As far as I know, the White House had nothing to do with it.

Although I did not happen to participate in the Tarawa operation, I know from equally bracing combat experience on Iwo Jima and elsewhere that no Marine in combat spends his time carrying "special beds for officers," and I question very strongly that any Marine "who landed under the Japanese fire at Tarawa" did so while carrying "special beds for officers."

I do not concur in Mr. Swing's judgment that Michael Blankfort is an altogether capable biographer. He has slanted his work to suit rather obvious *a priori* conclusions, and it is my opinion that, whatever else may be found within the "Big Yankee," objectivity and careful devotion to fact are not always present.

R. D. HEINL, JR.
Major, U. S. Marine Corps

Washington, D.C.

"And this jolly old gentleman lives far away down at the South Pole. . . ."

Mr. Brown's Frozen Heart

SIR: In his recent review of "Allegro" [*SRL* Nov. 8] John Mason Brown says that as an ex-invalid he became conscious of what "Allegro" was saying and that a "certain selfish fear froze his apprehensive heart."

Also, that as a cured Manhattanite who might need to be cured again he dreaded what might happen in case of the footlight call, "Is there a doctor in the house?"

As one who has reason to expect much from what Mr. Brown sees and who also enjoyed seeing and hearing "Allegro" in its Boston debut the conclusion is inevitable that Mr. Brown misjudged his recovery and his frozen, apprehensive heart left him less conscious than he realized.

Otherwise, how could he devote the larger part of six *SRL* columns to setting up and tearing apart his obsession that the sole and dominant message of "Allegro" is that neither big-city hospitals nor big-city doctors are worthy of trust?

It is just too bad that Mr. Brown was not in condition so that he could have observed some of the musical selections, the clever exaggeration of the repetitious chit-chat (yak-yak-yak) of a not sufficiently rare type of cocktail party, or the dual picture showing the adolescents' vision of their dancing set off against the background of actual performance.

"Allegro," of course, exaggerates the coarseness of wealth worship and idealizes the simpler life, but is much more worth seeing than one would conclude from Mr. Mason's seeing.

LYNN M. RANGER.

Lynn, Mass.

"Bluebeard's" Sesquiduocentennial

SIR: Hasn't a notable anniversary been overlooked by the book profession? Considering the hullabaloo that has attended anniversaries of lesser works such as "Alice in Wonderland," it seems to me that some huzzahs are due upon the sesquiduocentennial of the book whence came tales more widely read than any published since. (The Bible and the First Folio of Shakespeare appeared earlier.)

The year 1697 is the date of the first edition of "Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passé Avec des Moralités," in which Charles Perrault, lawyer, poet, member of the French Academy, told "Puss in Boots," "Bluebeard," "Little Red Riding Hood," and other tales in versions now universal in popularity. The book's success inspired his son, Perrault d'Arma-Court, to bring out another, "Contes des Fées," that included "Cinderella."

CLARK KINNAIRD.

New York, N. Y.

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Seeing Things

CANNED DRAMA

IT WAS the size of all those faces in "Mourning Becomes Electra,"* scowling down on me in close-ups to which I happened to be too close, that made clearer for me than anything ever has one of the most widely admitted of Eugene O'Neill's defects as a tragic dramatist.

Rosalind Russell, Katina Paxinou, Raymond Massey, Michael Redgrave, and the others were up there on the screen, suffering in Borglum dimensions the murderous, suicidal, and incestuous torments of Mr. O'Neill's Mannon-Atreus clan. No Mesozoic monsters, not the brontosaurus, the triceratops, or the tyrannosaurus rex, had boasted such sizable heads as these Yankee-Greeks.

Of mortals the camera had made Brobdingnagians. Their eyes were as large as globes. Their noses were mountain ranges; their foreheads cliffs; their mouths canyons. But, though the Mannons had now acquired those swelled heads which by helpful convention insures the visibility of movie actors, Mr. O'Neill's characters had undergone an uneven development. The power and beauty of their language had not kept pace with the inflation of their faces. If anything, the words they spoke seemed to have grown smaller, coming as they did from such big mouths.

They were the same words that Alice Brady, Alla Nazimova, Lee Baker, and Earle Larimore had uttered unforgettably when Mr. O'Neill's trilogy was new. On the stage these had done their full duty. At least they had gone unchallenged. The tension of Mr. O'Neill's storytelling, the passion of his better scenes, and the skill of the original production had kept us from analyzing too carefully the sentences to which we were listening. But now, when spoken by titans on the screen, Mr. O'Neill's language was exposed as if by a magnifying glass. Its meagerness, above all its prosiness as tragic utterance, was made clear.

To regret Mr. O'Neill's lack of great language is no new lament. All of us who admire him have had to admit that, though he is preeminent throughout the world as a contemporary writer of tragedy, what keeps Mr. O'Neill from joining the select company of truly great tragic dramatists is this very lack.

"The spirit of inquiry meets the spirit of poetry and tragedy is born" was W. MacNeil Dixon's memorable explanation of the birth of tragedy. No one can deny that Mr. O'Neill has been possessed by the spirit of inquiry. Ugliness has held no terror for him. In it he has even seen beauty, and at his best made us see it, too. He has faced without flinching the sufferings to which men and women are heir. He has sought, again and again, to look beyond Man's bickerings with his neighbors and concerned himself with Man's relationship to his God.

Mr. O'Neill's quest for first causes has granted to the least of his plays a dimension they could not otherwise have claimed. He is as fearless and effective an emotionalist as has written for the modern stage. As an innovator, he has had no match; as a melodramatist, few equals. Yet, in spite of his uncommon virtues, he has been an eagle who has tried to fly with a sparrow's wings. His spirit has soared; his prose has kept him earthbound. Although he has had the tragic vision, he has lacked the tragic voice. In his case the spirit of poetry has never quite met up with the spirit of inquiry.

"Although [this film] may deserve an 'E' for Effort . . it will never win one for Ecstasy or Excitement."

This is not to deny Mr. O'Neill's better plays either the importance or the fascination they have possessed as theatre. It is merely to indicate that what one remembers in them is scenes, not lines; characters, instead of speeches; and passions, pitilessly released, rather than emotions universally phrased.

Few who saw "Mourning Becomes Electra" on the stage will forget the excitements of that long evening which seemed so short. It was one of those experiences which justify a playgoer's faith. We all have had them. Not often. Not often enough. When we do have them, they prove adhesive. They tape themselves to our memories.

Mr. O'Neill's trilogy found the modern theatre at its best. He had dared to restate in Civil War terms one of the most terrible and shuddery of all tales of murder and revenge. It was the same fable that had attracted Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The third of Mr. O'Neill's plays, until it reached its final thrilling moments, did, to be sure, become bogged down in Freud. But the first two, and the evening as a whole, possessed grandeur, that rarest of qualities on either side of the footlights.

THE EXCITEMENTS of "Mourning Becomes Electra" were irresistible. Its New England home with its luminous gray interiors, its columned portico, and the swallowing darkness of its central door was as triumphant an example of stage design as even Robert Edmond Jones has ever produced. The production was brilliantly directed by Philip Moeller. Moreover, it was acted to the hilt, especially by Alla Nazimova as the Clytemnestra-Christine and Alice Brady as the Electra-Lavinia.

What Mr. O'Neill's drama lacked in eloquence, it could claim in tension. On the stage its language proved more than adequate in communicating its force. If not memorable, its speech was serviceable. The story was not orchestrated so that what was fearful in it, even excessive to the point of the ridiculous, became sublime. But—and this is all-important—it remained fearful. The result was melodrama made heroic rather than heroic tragedy.

As, one by one, the cadavers bit the dust, Robert Benchley confessed he felt the presence in the wings of Mr. O'Neill's father, James O'Neill of "Monte Cristo" fame, counting "One," "Two," "Three." But even Mr. Benchley had to admit that Monte Cristo's son was thrilling "the bejeezus out of us, just as his father used to, and

*MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA, adapted by Dudley Nichols from the trilogy by Eugene O'Neill, as originally produced by the Theatre Guild, Inc. Directed and produced by Mr. Nichols for RKO Pictures, Inc. With a cast including Rosalind Russell, Michael Redgrave, Raymond Massey, Katina Paxinou, Leo Genn, Kirk Douglas, Nancy Coleman, Henry Hull, Sara Allgood, Thurston Hall, etc. At the Golden.

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that is what we go to the theatre for."

As a film, "Mourning Becomes Electra" has just about the opposite effect upon us. It misplaces the excitement which distinguished the play. Worse than that, it proves almost unendurably tiresome during its final hour. The reasons for this are many. Mr. O'Neill's truest success lay in his mastery of the theatre's limitations. The film's error is that it never takes advantage of the motion picture's freedom. Its fundamental mistake is not only to leave well enough alone but to feel that a photographed play would, or could, be a satisfactory film.

It is odd that any screen director as brilliant and knowledgeable as Dudley Nichols should have surrendered to such a misapprehension. Yet this is what Mr. Nichols has done. He allows his movie to become the victim of his admiration for Mr. O'Neill's play. The result is inevitable. The very triumphs which Mr. O'Neill scored as a dramatist behind a proscenium become failures when repeated as devices before a camera.

In the long course of "Mourning Becomes Electra" Mr. O'Neill permitted his action to stray once, and only once, away from the steps or the interior of the Mannon home. This was when he led us briefly to Captain Brant's ship. There is no earthly reason why Mr. Nichols should have confined his action in the same way. Yet, with the exception of a few shots such as those on the clipper, at the station when General Mannon and Orin return from the war, and at a boarding house in New York, the picture is housebound in the play's fashion.

Mr. Nichols keeps his camera as constricted as a dog on a leash. The fault is his, if our attention becomes restive under such constraint. Instead of restating Mr. O'Neill's story in cinematic terms, he tells it as Mr. O'Neill told it in theatrical terms. Mr. Nichol's major concession to a totally different medium is to rely wearisomely on old-fashioned close-ups. These, alas, tend to underscore what is commonplace in Mr. O'Neill's dialogue rather than to emphasize what is exceptional in his dramatic ability.

Although Michael Redgrave is truly remarkable as Orin and Raymond Massey at his best as General Mannon, most of the performances are marked more by their insufficiency than by their distinction. They seek to duplicate what their predecessors in the theatre had done without being able to compete with them. Even so capable an actress as Katina Paxinou cannot live down the memory of Alla Nazimova's Christine. No one

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who saw Alice Brady or Judith Anderson as Lavinia is apt to be satisfied with Rosalind Russell's characterization. Miss Russell does her best to look the part. She strikes the proper attitudes. She frowns; she sulks and glowers; and endeavors to stoke the inner fires of Lavinia. But her best is not enough. She does not approach even Mr. O'Neill's New England Greeks bearing the needed gifts.

Just why "Mourning Becomes Electra" should have been turned into a motion picture eludes me. It eludes me almost as much as why, once the decision to film it was reached, this particular kind of canned drama should be made from it. The result is handsome, costly, and no doubt well meant. Although it may deserve an "E" for Effort, and surely merits one for Exhaustion, I regret to say it will never win one for either Ecstasy or Excitement.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

Your Literary I.Q.

SPEAKING OF VALENTINES

By Howard Collins

Helen Pettigrew, of Charleston, Ark., asks you to fill the blanks at the end of the following literary valentines, giving the name of the girl and the first name of the author. There is a blank for each missing letter. Allowing five points for each of the twenty missing names, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers are on page 31.

1. Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
   The very eyes of me,
   And has command of every part
   To live and die for thee.
   To — — — — — — from — — — — — —

2. Drink to me only with thine eyes
   And I will pledge with mine;
   Or leave a kiss within the cup
   And I'll not ask for wine.
   To — — — — — from — — —

3. Why then should I seek further store
   And still make love anew?
   When change itself can give no more,
   'Tis easy to be true.
   To — — — — — from — — — — — —

4. All the mystery is thine,
   Smiling, frowning, evermore,
   Thou art perfect in love-lore,
   Ever varying — — — — — — — —
   To — — — — — — — — from — — — — — —

5. I could not love thee, Dear, so much
   Loved I not Honor more.
   To — — — — — — — — from — — — — — —

6. When I hear you express an affection so warm
   Ne'er think, my beloved, that I do not believe;
   For your lips would the soul of suspicion disarm,
   And your eyes beam a ray which can never deceive.
   To — — — — — — — — from — — — — — —

7. How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
   I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
   My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
   For the ends of Being and Ideal Grace.
   To — — — — — — from — — — — — — — —

8. Maid of my love! sweet .....!
   In beauty's light you glide along;
   Your eye is like the star of eve,
   And sweet your voice, as seraph's song.
   To — — — — — — — — from — — — — — —

9. Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
   Are still more lovely in my sight
   Than golden beams of orient light,
   My .....!
   To — — — — from — — — — — —

10. On desperate seas long wont to roam,
    Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
    Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
    To the glory that was Greece
    And the grandeur that was Rome.
    To — — — — — from — — — — —

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NEW EDITIONS

CHEKHOV is a striking example of an author who, although he has produced a vast body of work, can be represented justly by a volume of selections. This is because his writing is all of a piece, because one play can reveal his quality as a playwright, because a score of stories can display the characteristics and merits of his eight hundred tales. Thanks to this happy state of affairs, and to expert editorship, "The Portable Chekhov" (Viking, $2), edited with an introduction by Avrahm Yarmolinsky, is a highly satisfactory book. Twenty-eight stories, "The Cherry Orchard," a vaudeville sketch, and a handful of letters—including a particularly interesting group written during the author's journey to and from the penal hell of Sakhalin—make up the contents. The entire text, with the exception of five tales and three letters, has been newly translated by Mr. Yarmolinsky into an English more vivacious (and, I have no doubt, more faithful) than the familiar English of the Constance Garnett versions.

Chekhov's great quality was, as his editor declares, "his talent for humanity." He could write to Suvorin: "God's world is good. Only one thing isn't good: ourselves." But with this view there went compassion instead of bitterness; the humorous compassion, free of sentimentality, which informs so many of his tales. He seems to have written as naturally as he breathed, although in later years he tried hard to discipline his innate facility. Few writers have ever commanded such colloquial ease, few have had the ability to close so quickly, at the very outset of a story, the gap between reader and narrator. This ease has deceived a good many innocents into thinking that all they needed to do was to relax and write. We have seen the imitative results. It is good to have so much of the original and genuine product packed into so convenient a volume.

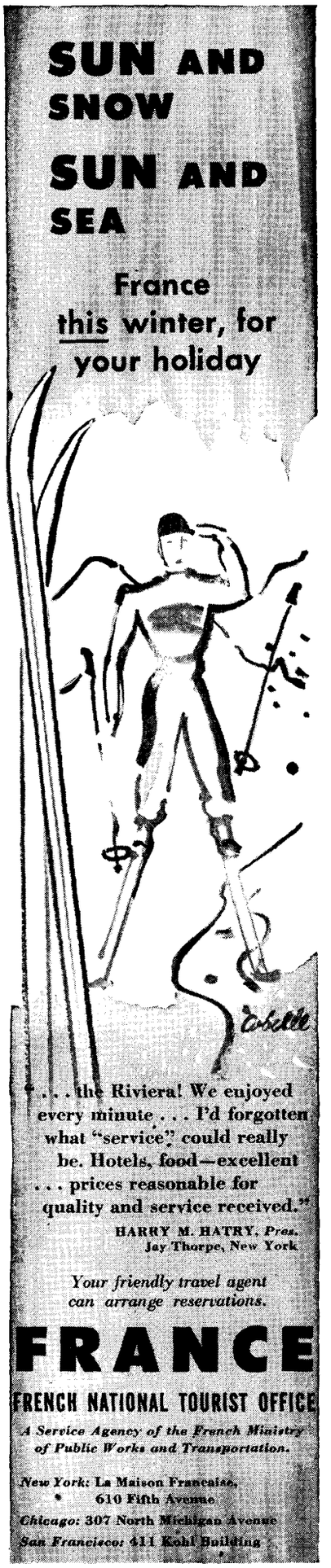
Two more titles have been added to the attractive Galaxy Edition of the World's Classics (Oxford Press, $1.75 each): Tocqueville's "Democracy in America," edited by Henry Steele Commager; and "Documents of the Christian Church," selected and edited by Henry Bettenson. The Frenchman's philosophical study of "the image of democracy," as he found it in America during the 1830's, is a work of enduring value, much drawn upon by those who have been busy lately reviewing our country's past; and Mr. Commager's abridgment is perfectly adapted to the needs of the general reader, Mr. Bettenson's rich collection of documents has been highly praised by specialists in the field, but one need not be a specialist to find it a useful and fascinating source-book.

Comprehensive as it is, however, it holds no theological document that might prepare the reader for D. H. Lawrence's imaginative excursion into Christian history, "The Man Who Died" (New Directions, $1.50). This story of the physical and spiritual love which Jesus experienced after he was taken down alive from the cross is instinct with Lawrence's individual brand of mysticism. Some readers will find it beautiful and moving, while others will turn away from it in disgust.

Frederic Prokosch's "The Asiatics" (Doubleday, $3) has been praised by men of weight, and it is certain that much talent and imagination went into this dream-like tale of a fantastic journey from Beirut to the Chinese frontier; but it seems to me that book and characters are well described by a passage in which Mr. Prokosch sums up his impressions of an execution: "It was quite melodramatic, and yet at the same time singularly empty and unreal, as if none of them really knew what they were doing, or had the slightest idea of what was behind it all. A puppet show, no more."

Never have Mr. Pecksniff, Mrs. Gamp, and the other major and minor characters of "Martin Chuzzlewit" been more handsomely housed than they are in the octavo edition of that novel now published by Knopf ($7.50), designed by W. A. Dwiggins, and delightfully illustrated by Mary Petty. Anyone who has a lover of Dickens on his Christmast list need shop no further. . . . In "We, The People" (Harper, $3.75) Leo Huberman has told the story of our nation, as viewed by the light of a Marxist lamp, in simple and lively prose. . . . Margery Sharp's "Britannia Mews" (Little, Brown, $2.50) is an entertaining job of slick writing, all surface and no depth. . . . Shaw's "Man and Superman has been reprinted, with photographs from the Maurice Evans production (Dodd, Mead, $2.50).

BEN RAY REDMAN.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* They are: Sumner Welles, Chester W. Nimitz, William O. Douglas, Harold E. Stassen, Leverett Saltonstall, Harold L. Ickes, Herschel V. Johnson, David E. Lilienthal. (Mr. Gunther himself was one of the four *not* currently reading *Inside U. S. A.*)

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HARPER

Personal History.

Cyrus Le Roy Baldridge started his career in the First World War as an artist on the old Stars and Stripes. *Since that time his unusual illustrations—in "Half the World Is Ispahan," "Hajji Baba," "White Africans and Black," "Rickshaw Boy," and many other volumes—have brought to Americans the feel and the color of unknown lands. . . . The career of Geddes Mumford was snuffed out by the Second World War, when he was nineteen. His father, Lewis Mumford—author of such well-known studies as "The Golden Day," "The Brown Decades," and "The Culture of Cities"—tells in "Green Memories" the story of Geddes, who was an advanced scout in an infantry company. He was killed leading a patrol.*

"Picture-Fellow-with-Big-Feet"

TIME AND CHANCE. By Cyrus Le Roy Baldridge. New York: The John Day Co. 1947. 431 *pp.* $7.50.

Reviewed by WALTER HAVIGHURST

IN THE streets of Peking, where the rickshaw coolies nickname their customers, Mr. Baldridge was "Tall-Picture-Fellow-with-Big-Feet." In this freehand, wide-ranging autobiography he appears as an artist with a liking for people of every creed and color and with an endless curiosity about their lives. These qualities warm the hundreds of drawings in this handsome book, and they give a three-dimensional reality to his life story. It is a story of a restless American who acquired a cosmopolitan grasp of the world. And it is equally a story of people in the streets of Peking, the bazaars of Baghdad, and the jungle clearings of Africa.

Though he never scorned the commercial civilization of his time, Mr. Baldridge has always scorned the pursuit of money, and so he kept himself free. His travels helped him to see through pretense and vanity, at home or abroad. He traveled without condescension, with roving eyes and a receptive mind, and sometimes he saw not only the other exotic peoples but also his own race with a new and clear appraisal. "Time and Chance" is the story of a wandering artist, wonderfully retaining his freshness of observation and his instinctive sympathy, who believes that no model can possibly be interpreted without an understanding of his background.

The fortunate life is not always the best life. No artist could have a better background than Mr. Baldridge's wandering boyhood, spent with his mother peddling Fire Clay cooking pots. It was homeless, pinched, uncertain, yet surely it was a rich childhood for an artist. Always the changing scene, the fresh, new faces, the constant need for adaptation and appraisal. With his mother he slept in hall bedrooms, learned the multiplication tables to the rhythm of train wheels, drove a peddler's wagon through the country roads of Missouri, Oklahoma, and Tennessee. And so, even at that early age, the world never grew tame and familiar. It was always new, changing, full of surprises.

—From the book.

Cyrus Le Roy Baldridge followed his teacher's precept: "An artist must know all sorts of people and understand their lives."

At ten he was left to live alone and to begin his study at Frank Holme's Art School in Chicago. Holme told him: "An artist must know all sorts of people and understand their lives." That became young Roy Baldridge's goal. During his years at the University of Chicago it was crowded out by the distractions of undergraduate life. But in France in 1917 it was reasserted. As a staff artist for *The Stars and Stripes* he traveled with Alexander Woollcott, sketching the many faces of war and beginning the reflection on war and peace that

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makes one of the strains in this wise and honest book.

"In any spot of China an artist could sketch for years." He first discovered China alone, and, a few years later, returned to that inexhaustible scene with his wife, Caroline Singer, for a happy and productive period in Peking. He puts the life on the printed page almost as vividly as on canvas—the faces of the coolies, the garbage hounds roving the streets, the barrow-men trundling "night soil" to the gardens, the din of the tinsmiths beating out stoves for winter, the drums, cymbals, and songs of the hawkers, the tiled roofs and the carved temples. Beneath this kaleidoscopic picture he is aware of the poverty, pestilence, and superstition of China, and of the deep-rooted family ties that allow no concept of the individual or of society as a whole.

Back in America they saw the lined, anxious, gray-white faces in New York, and they thought of the tranquility of Chinese faces.

The Baldridges had promised themselves they would never be tied down with responsibilities and possessions. So when they became concerned about Negro Americans and wondered about their ancestral background, they set off in a dusty cargo boat for Africa. All the way across the continent they found simple, friendly people, happy, harmonious children, and unhappy, unhealthy colonials from the dominant countries of Europe. They developed an affection for the native people and a conviction that their fumbling efforts at self-government were fully as good as the government provided by European officials.

The art of traveling is well demonstrated in these pages. The Baldridges had the rewarding pleasure of traveling cheaply. With unfailing adaptability they accepted native food and lodging and the cheapest transportation. That brought them close to native life and it produced vigor, good spirits, and good sketches. Often they got shrewd advice from native travelers—such as the suggestion that instead of paying fare through the African jungle to Accra they charter a bus and pick up paying passengers. They had their journey, and a net profit of two pounds.

They did not always find good sketching. Addis Abbaba, being neither African nor European, was disappointing. They found a warm welcome in India, but Iraq and Iran proved inhospitable. Inevitably there were professional disappointments. Their handsome book on Africa, published in 1929 at ten dollars, was remaindered at sixty cents. But their wandering life brought them many friends, unexpected discoveries, and always work that demanded the skill of the

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hand and the understanding of the mind and heart.

Though he could not accept the bourgeois security of American life, Mr. Baldridge was never one of the lost generation. He was seeking rather than lost. He found people to sketch in helmet, fez, and turban, in robes and in nakedness. He found kindness and understanding everywhere, except among conquerors. He found a common humanity in the people of three continents, and saw that "time and chance happeneth to them all."

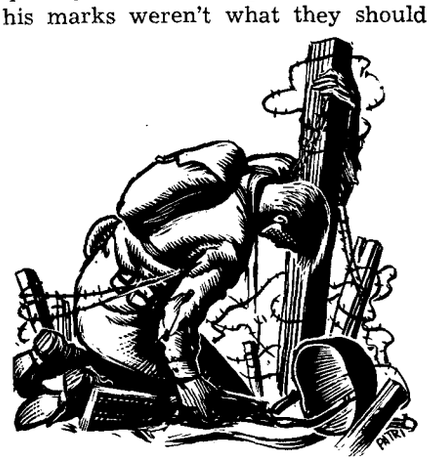
Good Soldier

GREEN MEMORIES (The Story of Geddes). By Lewis Mumford. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1947. *342 pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by MERLE MILLER

GEDDES MUMFORD was not exactly the kind of son one would have expected Lewis Mumford to have; after all, Geddes's father is one of the most challenging and important scholars and intellectuals of our day, interested in and informed on everything. Usually, a strong-minded and successful father attempts to mold his son into a pale image of himself. Lewis Mumford didn't, and, even if he had tried, Geddes would probably have been too self-reliant and determined to fall into the pattern.

Geddes was, in no sense, an intellectual; like the old Persians, his father reports, he knew how to ride a horse, to shoot straight, and to tell the truth. From the time he was four, he loved hunting and fishing best of any of his spare-time activities; he was always fascinated by science; he determined early, and never changed his mind, that he'd never take a job in which he couldn't spend most of his time outdoors. He collected snakes and friends and learning, although he was never a diligent student and frequently worried his parents because his marks weren't what they should have been, and that peculiar and ugly problem which has so early disillusioned so many other boys never bothered Geddes much. "He said he let circumstances decide," his father writes. "Whenever he felt a friendship was developing, he took pains to bring out the fact that he was partly Jewish."



A warm, intimate, moving picture of a human being emerges from the pages of "Green Memories," Lewis Mumford's biography of his son. It is a completely different book from Mr. Mumford's scholarly, carefully researched studies of society, like "The Culture of Cities" and such masterpieces of literary criticism and discovery as "Herman Melville." Obviously, "Green Memories" is a work of love. Yet Mr. Mumford has avoided all the dangers which might have marred a father's biography of his only son; the book is never sentimental, never embarrassing, never overdrawn.

The years seem to have passed very quickly; it seems so short a time from the days Geddes was enjoying A. A. Milne's "The House at Pooh Corner" to that first adventurous trip he took to Florida, on his own, to the day he entered the Army to fight the war his father had so often warned Americans they could not expect to escape. Geddes was a good soldier. He didn't like the army; very few sensitive, intelligent men, either young or old, do; he accepted whatever job was assigned him with a kind of skeptical amusement, but when his division, the 95th, arrived in Italy and was put into action, he became dissatisfied with being a messenger in battalion headquarters and frequently wandered off by himself, carrying his rifle and going into and sometimes beyond the loosely held, scattered front lines; finally, by his own insistence, he became an advance scout, a dangerous position in an infantry company, one in which the odds against dying of old age are overwhelmingly strong. In September, leading a patrol into enemy territory, he was killed by German machine-gun fire. Geddes was then nineteen.

When, later, a sergeant who had been a friend of Geddes wrote his parents that, "Geddes's first sergeant . . . said he wished he had a company of men like him, that he was absolutely fearless," one realizes, because of the skill with which Mr. Mumford has portrayed his son, that this was not the kind of letter written simply to comfort bereaved parents; it was the indisputable truth. In "Green Memories" Lewis Mumford has not only told the story of one youth; he has told of a whole generation that was once called "soft."

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DEMI-DEVIL

(*Continued from page 10*)

out in the heat of anger; he knew how to bide his time, how to age his resentments. One thing was certain: whoever stepped on his toes could not sidestep his anger. As I am perhaps too fond of saying, it was Pope's instinct to take offense, and he made it his trade.

But Pope was not just vindictive. His vanity demanded that he preen as well as protect himself; that he lose no chance of appearing as generous or kindhearted or wise or rakish or precocious or indifferent to fame as possible. He went to great lengths that people (and posterity) should think so, and to even greater lengths lest they think otherwise. His desire to seem nobler than he was; his indulgence in what Dr. Johnson, and not Dr. Johnson alone, would have termed cant; his carefully limelighted admiration for the good life, are much harder to bear than his malice. Vanity, moreover, made Pope fantastically devious, involving him in almost as much conspiracy as cant. As Lady Bolingbroke once remarked, the little man couldn't have resisted playing the politician with cabbages and turnips. The key to much of Pope's life is the character of many of Pope's letters. He not only wrote a vast number, full of fancy sentiments, in a ceremonious style; he not only used the same ones more than once: but later in life he tried wherever possible to get his letters back, that he might ink out what was injurious and touch up what was not. And all this was merely preliminary to Pope's real object: getting his letters published. I have not the space, and am by no means certain that I have the skill, to set forth the famous "P.T." saga in all its detail. Very briefly, however, Pope invented a person named P.T. who, through a flesh-and-blood intermediary of Pope's hiring, surreptitiously supplied a practical publisher, Edmund Curl, with a good many Pope letters. These being in due course published, Pope now stepped forth to denounce the correspondence as unauthorized and inaccurate; and soon after brought out, in "self-defense," the authorized version that had been his object from the first.

Using the same tactics, he pursued much the same strategems with some of his best friends, notably Swift.

It need not surprise us that a man who from vanity could trick his closest friends should from pique, or genuine pain, contrive harsh revenges against his enemies. Once, for example, Pope pretended to seal a reconciliation with Curl by "civilly" drinking sack with him: shortly afterwards, the bookseller was griped by the emetic Pope had dropped into his wine. Usually, however, Pope chose to pay off old scores with from a couplet's worth to a column's worth of verse. Sometimes, as with Hervey or Lady Mary, the repayment went on, in this poem and that, for years; sometimes, as with Theobald—or Cibber, who displaced him—the victim of Pope's displeasure became the very hero of his poem. Sometimes, as with many of the dunces, the victims had sinned not so much against Pope as against poetry, and the thwacking was administered in the name of Art. But whatever the provocation, and whether mere concentrated venom or sheer malicious magic—

Pox'd by her love or libeled by her hate

or

Beauty that shocks you, Parts that none will trust,
Wit that can creep, and Pride that licks the dust

—the punishment always more than fits the crime.

Diligent in implying the best about himself, Pope shrank—more than a satirist needs to do—from owning up to his more questionable impulses. Having anonymously published something licentious or sharp-toothed, Pope did not merely deny having written it when asked; with a pious look he

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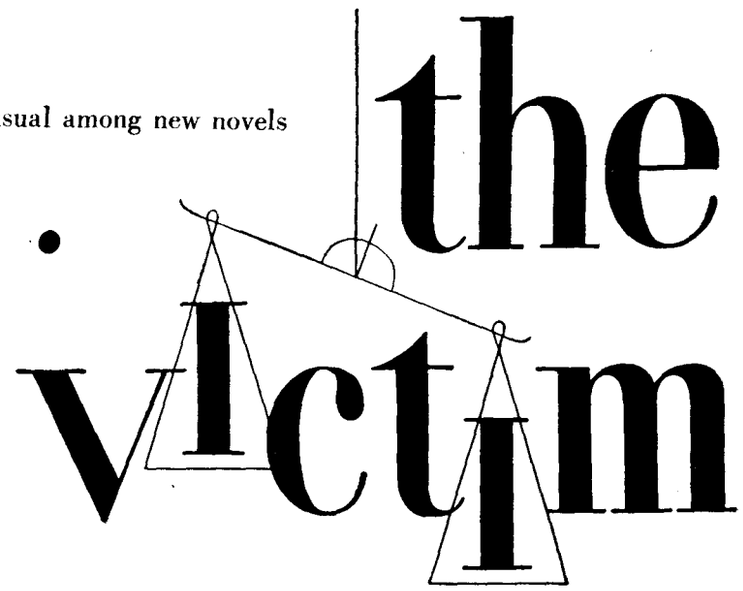

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COWARD-McCANN

would deny having written it unasked, and would sometimes go so far as to abuse the poem or "identify" the anonymous author.

Such duplicity, though there may have been an element of self-protection in it, was chiefly grounded in a nature that had to throw dust in people's eyes, had to mislead, had to lie. The letters are filled with pointless lying, often in the form of needlessly fervent or solemn assertions; the life is a tissue of ambiguities and falsifications. Having lied like many another man about his ancestry, Pope proceeded to lie, like very few others, about everything else. Professor Sherburn, the foremost living authority on Pope, is indignant that Leslie Stephen should have characterized Pope as "the most untruthful man of his age." It is indeed a whopping indictment, for the age of Pope, furious with faction and intrigue, was outrageously untruthful, outstandingly treacherous.

Yet even to ask the question today, "Was Pope a bad man?" is obviously to beg it. Doubly to beg it: for on the one side there juts up all that tends to redeem Alexander Pope, and on the other, all that helps to explain him. We must seek as much of a medical as of a moral judgment for a man who nearly all his life had a sick-crooked body and hence a sick-crooked mind. Nor need we be sanctimonious about a man who, endowed with an incomparable talent for vituperation, was prodded time and again into making use of it. We must see Pope, furthermore, in relation to his age: he was enormously sensitive, and the age was coarse; incredibly vain, and the age was cruel. But all the same we must deplore a general lack of forbearance and an almost utter lack of charity in Pope who, be it noted, put into polished form virtually every cliché of morality except love thine enemies, and who considered the ability "to forgive" as not human but "divine."

The Victorians—most notably the Rev. Whitwell Elwin, who grew so abusive he had to be disbarred from completing what is still the standard edition of Pope's works—went at Pope all wrong. Men so very respectable, and so very repressed, got an almost pathological enjoyment out of being scandalized; and in Pope's endless mendacities, in his overflowing malice, in his habitual and sometimes smirking indecencies, there was much to scandalize them. Moreover, the Victorians railed against Pope as a man during an era when it was safest to depreciate him as an artist. And railed with little restraint: the Rev. Whitwell Elwin displays almost all of Pope's venom without any of his verve. Today the pendulum has rather swung to the other extreme. Since Elwin, who attempted to crucify him, Pope's most biased biographer is Miss Sitwell, who did all she could to make him out a martyr.

But he was even less a martyr than he was a monster. His hateful qualities are very glaring indeed: there is simply no means of arguing them away, and not much reason to suppose that had other people been habitually sympathetic, Pope would have been habitually sweet. Yet, it must be made very clear that beyond a gay and witty side, Pope had a charming side, a kindly side, even a truly loyal and generous side. It was once the custom, after painting Pope at full length as a fiend, to concede that he had been good to his family. We can do better than that. The extremely affectionate and devoted son was, toward a surprising number of people, an extremely affectionate and devoted friend. He was deeply and generously attached to Martha Blount. His flattery (as manifested in his letters) can be degrading; but Pope had a good deal of social grace; and as a talker and host must have had a good deal of personal charm. No doubt, like all the other writers of his age, and most writers in every age, Pope was a climber and a snob; yet from a very early period of his career he was certainly as much sought after as seeking.

The man knew how to please almost as artfully as he knew how to wound. The best of his compliments are very different from his habitual flatteries —in fact, they do not rank too far below the best of his barbs. And if Pope loved a lord, it was not without gallantry: for his loyalties were, on the whole, very much less toward lords in power than toward lords in opposition. Pope was not at all put off by unpopular causes and he was not upset by a worse than unpopular, by a downright unsafe, religion. More than one friend bade Pope mend his faith lest it might mar his fortune; but first and last, and as the real victim of some of its slighter and the potential victim of some of its severer disabilities, Pope remained an avowed Roman Catholic. It holds true, I think, that for all that was sick in Pope, and deceitful, and done for effect, and almost fiendishly rancorous, he had a quite impressive amount of character. "That long disease, my life" was spent, not in a bed, but on a battlefield.

The foregoing article has been condensed from the introduction to "The Selected Works of Alexander Pope" [Modern Library], to be published next spring.

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FICTION

(Continued from page 16)

is unable to see his readers other than as people who are mentally about three feet high. We all know what happens to writers thus afflicted. They are resourceful in raising questions which threaten to reach into the farthest recesses of the human soul. They are equally resourceful in supplying the soft answer, or no answer at all. Is it not better—they seem to say—to be neat, or slick, or ingenious,

or suggestive: to be hysterical, if necessary; or vulgar, if need be? In short, is it not wiser to beg a question than to take the awful risk of boring a reader?

"Nothing So Strange" is rather a choice example of this cautious approach to the art of fiction. The hero, Mark Bradley, is passed rapidly through several problems of great complexity. (1) He becomes the assistant to an eminent Viennese scientist, who turns out to be a blatant Nazi. Is he morally justified, knowing what he does, in continuing to work for such a man? (2) The scientist first takes the credit for one of Mark Bradley's original discoveries, and then plays an underhand part in the judicial murder of Bradley's wife. The revengeful Bradley, while pretending to be still full of admiration for this villain, is able, on the very eve of the outbreak of war, to sabotage one of the villain's most inspired speculations—thus giving a decided and perhaps a decisive setback to German researches in atomic fission. Has one scientist the right, in no matter how worthy a cause, to ruin the efforts of another scientist? (3) Returning to America, Bradley is employed at Oak Ridge, and resigns when he is faced with the truly stupendous question: Should or should not a nation have recourse to atomic warfare?

Mark Bradley, after an airplane accident, suffers from a nervous breakdown which baffles the psychiatrist and the government agent who, for different reasons, are anxious to probe into his past. They turn him over to a female journalist, who is the actual narrator of this story. The young lady is strangly flippant, though much in love; Bradley is, to say the least, laconic; and the result is that certain passages in the novel give the curious impression of being at once slangy and dead. None the less, Mr. Hilton's narrative powers are such that he can keep the reader turning the pages in the hope that something, somewhere, will come out of all this. Nothing does. The problems are raised, only to be buried under a nice light treatment.

One should do Mr. Hilton the credit of supposing that he had hoped, when embarking upon this novel, to say something pertinent about our contemporary anxieties. Upon this supposition, he deserves a round of tempered applause. Had he treated his readers like adults, the applause might have become quite rousing.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. To Anthea from Robert. 2. To Celia from Ben. 3. To Celia from Charles. 4. To Madeline from Alfred. 5. To Lucasta from Richard. 6. To Caroline from Gordon. 7. To Robert from Elizabeth. 8. To Genevieve from Samuel. 9. To Mary from William. 10. To Helen from Edgar.

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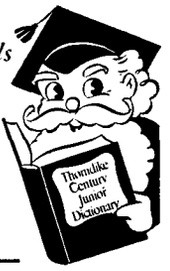

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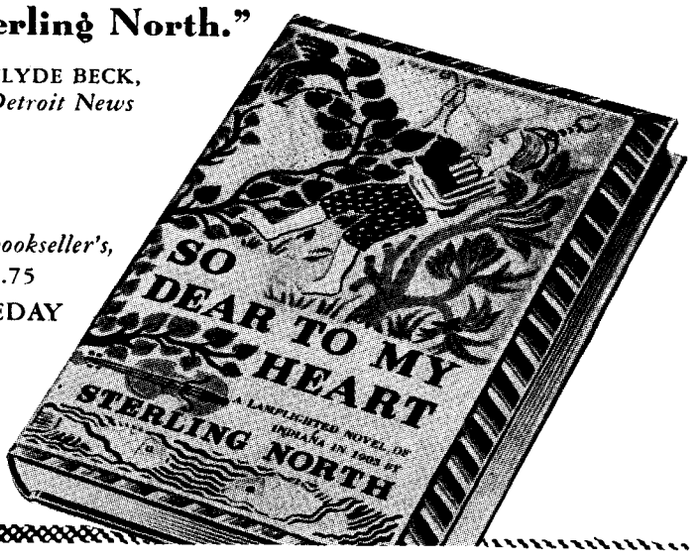

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THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS 1947

To Thee, meek Majesty, soft King
Of simple graces and sweet loves!
Each of us his lamb will bring,
Each his pair of silver doves.
At last, in fire of thy fair eyes,
Ourselves become our own best sacrifice.

"The Shepherd's Hymn"—Richard Crashaw.

THERE is a special spirit abroad in this Christmas season. From coast to coast the Friendship Train gathers up its harvest and carries it swiftly to the Eastern ports where it will be shipped across the sea. In various schools and meeting places American boys and girls are busy with wood and hammers, paint and padlocks building new Treasure Chests to fill with books and send to the children of Europe and Asia. In the last month this reviewer has seen and spoken to hundreds and hundreds of these youngsters. Some of them are practical and aggressive, some idealistic and tentative; but in them all is the spirit of sharing stronger than in other years. They came by thousands to the Children's Book Fair, and no one who saw it can forget the color and drama of the setting, the excited questions and comments of the children, the beauty of the books. As an exhibit it had that quality of "aliveness" that is often striven for but seldom attained. It was the perfect beginning of a season that seems, in many ways, to come nearer than ever before to the true spirit of Christmas.

MARY GOULD DAVIS.

AN ANGEL IN THE WOOD. By Dorothy P. Lathrop. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. No paging. $2.

The toy angel stood on the window ledge in the snow and held her candle very straight. Its flame burned steadily in the cold, still air, but all about it splinters of frost glittered and danced like tiny moths.

SO BEGINS the story of the little wooden angel who, with the flame of her candle, wakened vine and bush and tree to bud and fruit in the snowy forest on Christmas Eve. Not only did the field mice, the chipmunks, the squirrels, and the rabbits eat their fill, but they scampered eagerly about offering the fresh nuts and berries to others. They left some beside the sleepy woodchuck and even offered them to the grave owl. And in all this movement against the snow each little animal is true to his type. The red squirrel "scolded crossly at being awakened" until the angel thrust an acorn into its "open, angry mouth." Everyone who has watched a red squirrel in the woods knows about his bad temper! But on this Christmas Eve, in the light of the tiny candle and the stars, even the weasel is tamed. Curled up beside the angel, he watches the feast with "sharp, dark eyes." It is the bells ringing out at midnight that ends this lovely miracle. In the morning the little angel is standing on the snow-covered window sill where the children had placed her the night before. But once again the winter forest had blossomed and the small, wild things had had their Christmas feast.

These drawings are exquisite. One wishes that they could have been printed on a better quality of paper.

ONCE IN THE YEAR. By Elizabeth Yates. Illustrated by Nora S. Unwin. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc. 1947. No paging. $2.

THE PEOPLE in this story are those of Elizabeth Yates's "Mountain Born"; Peter, his father and mother, and old Benj who cares for the animals on the farm. When the story opens it is Christmas Eve and Martha, the mother, is baking Christmas cookies. Then she and Peter sit down before the fire and she reads the story from Saint Luke. Peter sees, lying between the leaves of her Bible, the tiny pansy that she had found as a child blooming in the forest on Christmas Eve. Later Martha and her husband go to the church to sing carols and Peter is left with old Benj. Old Benj tells the Christmas story, too, but in his own words and he adds to it the legend of the animals who on that one night in the year can speak together as men speak. Peter longs to hear them, so, at midnight, he slips out of bed and goes to the stable. There, hidden in the hay, he hears the horse, the cow, the sheep, and the hen identify themselves with the animals who worshiped the Christ Child in a stable in Bethlehem.

This is a moving story, beautifully told, and its format is distinguished. Nora Unwin's delicate drawings are printed in a warm red-brown. Each page is framed deeply in a design that interprets the story. Through text and drawings one gets a picture of a simple, friendly home, of a devout and loyal family, of a snowy hillside and a warm, snug barn where the beasts are cared for. There is one particularly lovely drawing of the shepherds and the angels, and one of the stable in Bethlehem with the donkey and two white lambs in the foreground.

BIG SUSAN. By Elizabeth Orton Jones. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. No paging. $2.

THIS Christmasy-looking book tells the story of Susan, her dollhouse, and her dolls, and it is told from the doll's point of view. There are Mr. and Mrs. Doll, six children, a cook, and a nursemaid. Susan has been occupied with other things and has rather neglected the dollhouse and its inhabitants. It is nearing Christmas Eve—the one night in the year when dolls can move about and speak together. So this loyal and energetic doll family decides to clean their house and get it ready for the Christmas festival. Things are in a rather bad condition. The cook has lost her wig, but it is discovered, and Mrs. Doll glues it on neatly. The nurse is found standing head down in the wash basin in the bathroom. Mr. Doll assists her down. Mrs. Doll, in her heart, wants a new baby. An adorable baby is found lying on the bed in the cook's room. Susan has put it there as a Christmas surprise. They name the baby Little Susan, and go happily to bed. The next morning, there is Susan with the Christmas tree, the decorations, and many presents. The pictures are in soft, warm colors. Every single thing that a little girl has ever wanted for her dolls and her dollhouse is here.

THE QUAINT AND CURIOUS QUEST OF JOHNNY LONGFOOT, THE SHOE KING'S SON. By Catherine Besterman. With Illustrations by Warren Chappell. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1947. 147 pp. $2.

THIS is a story that was originally told in Poland. It is a record of the adventures of young Johnny Longfoot who was sent by his father to spend his vacation with Uncle Lucas Longfoot at his estate, called Shoestring Manor. Johnny found that Uncle Lucas was a miser and that his estate was guarded by three fierce dogs and a bear whose name was Fuzzy the Hugger. Johnny wins

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them over to friendship and goes with them to the castle of an aristocratic cat—Barnac, Squire of Catnap. When Barnac sends them on a quest of the seven-league boots in a cave on Coral Island, Uncle Lucas goes along. They have many adventures, first with the bears in the mountains and then on the sea. Uncle Lucas tries to steal the treasure in the cave, including the famous boots, but he is shipwrecked and finally saved by Johnny and his friends among the fishes. In the end the treasure is lost, but Johnny and his faithful animals and Uncle Lucas—who has decided to forget his stinginess and greed and enjoy life—get back with the seven-league boots and are suitably rewarded by Barsac. The animals start off on a trip round the world, led by Barsac wearing the boots, and Johnny and Uncle Lucas return to Shoestring Manor, where Johnny's father joins them, and they all live in peace and prosperity ever after. This is a fresh, imaginative, delightful story with almost perfect illustrations.

LITTLE FU. Story and Lithographs by Raymond Creekmore. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. *No paging.* $2.

EVERYONE will remember Mr. Creekmore's book last year about Lokoshi, the little Eskimo boy. This, too, is a realistic story against an authentic background. It tells of a Chinese boy's trip down the Min River in China to Foochow, where the father sells his goods and buys supplies for his family. The story is told by little Fu himself and on every page is a lithograph that gives a vivid impression of life on a Chinese river. The story is so simply told it can be understood by little children.

THE MOUSE WITH THE SMALL GUITAR. Verses by Al Graham. Pictures by Tony Palazzo. Cambridge: Robert Welch Publishing Co. 1947. 36 *pp.* $1.50.

A SERIES of amusing verses about birds and animals with full-page drawings that are even more amusing. By the author and artist who presented us last year with Timothy Turtle.

BUBBLE AND THE CIRCUS. Written and illustrated by Josephine Hatcher. New York: Transatlantic Arts. 1947. 53 *pp.* $.75.

A NOTICE from the publisher informs us that the author and artist of this book is only seven years old. Her career promises to be an interesting one. It is a little book, printed in color so well that the drawings look as though they had been made directly on the page. Bubbles, the hero, is a small bear. We see him first, dressed in a neat blue and white suit, watering his garden. He makes so much money through selling his honey to other bears that he decides to buy a horse. This horse is one of the most ingratiating animals that we have seen in many a day. He is also temperamental and insists upon going backward rather than forward. Then two very bad bears, called Bibble and Bobble, set fire to Bubble's house. Burned out, he and the horse, whom he calls Pongo, join a circus and do very well indeed. The wife of the circus proprietor, Mrs. Brownbear, makes Bubble a very attractive green suit and he and Pongo live

—*From "Johnny Longfoot."*

happily with the circus family. Here are charm, humor, and originality.

VIOLET FAIRY BOOK. Collected and edited by Andrew Lang. Illustrated by Dorothy Lake Gregory. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1947. 233 *pp.* $2.50.

CRIMSON FAIRY BOOK. Collected and edited by Andrew Lang. Illustrated by Ben Kutcher. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1947. 233 *pp.* $2.50.

FOLLOWING a new edition of Andrew Lang's "Arabian Nights" his publishers are presenting the "Color" fairy books in a new and larger type and with new illustrations. Little change has been made in the text. The stories omitted can easily be found in other volumes. No compilation ever was or ever will be made without a challenge from someone! In this case a careful poll was taken by the publishers on the changes that were suggested. It was mainly to the children's librarians that they turned for advice because it is in the children's rooms of public libraries that these fairy tales live most vigorously. No amount of the realism that is literally stuffed into the heads of boys and girls today can kill their joy in the old fairy tales. Unprompted, they will choose the "Color" fairy books as long as the rainbow colors last. This new edition in its fresh, gay dress will have a joyous welcome.

ASSORTED SISTERS. By Florence Crannell Means. Illustrated by Helen Blair. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1947. 250 *pp.* $2.50.

IN THIS STORY Mrs. Means accomplishes something that has seldom been done before. She pictures with complete realism and lack of sentimentality the life of a missionary family. There are many counterparts of the Reverend Mr. Locke of this story. He is not a missionary in a foreign land where physical discomfort might be offset by the glamor of strange surroundings and dramatic events, but a missionary in the United States who is so in love with the ideal of serving underpriviliged people that, characteristically, he has little concern over creature comforts either for himself or for his family. The influential people responsible for the finances of his mission take his and the family self-sacrifice as a matter of course. But the Locke children were not "called" to this life, and at least one of them, fifteen-year-old Mary, had moments of rebellion, But, in spite of the fact that she did not elect a missionary career, she was born with some of the necessary attributes. She had a quick humor, high spirits, and a talent for friendship. She did not consciously select her three closest friends from three different racial groups — Chinese Mai-Lee, Spanish-American Marita; and Negro Caroline —but it was a fortunate coincidence that their loneliness at a time when Mary herself was lonely drew the four girls together. They had in common courage and initiative that could create happiness for others as well as for themselves.

Creating characters like these proves again that Mrs. Means enjoys all kinds of people because she understands all kinds. Few books with as definite a purpose as this are, at the same time, absorbing stories and convincing Americana.

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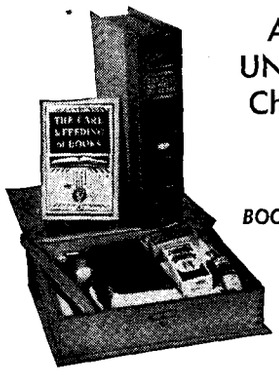

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BERG, "WOZZECK"; EXCERPTS. (1920). Janssen Symph. of L. A., Janssen. Charlotte Boerner, sop. Artist JS-12 (2 *pl*) *(Also on shellac)*	Good orchestra recording, plenty of liveliness. Solo violin, etc., well balanced; voice balance excellent. Wide range. Some slight blasting.	*AA to B+*	*(See below)* At last, a healthy sample of much-talked about opera—makes remarkably good listening. Boerner sings accurately, with understanding.
MORTON GOULD SHOWCASE. (Birth of the Blues, Begin the Beguine, etc., arr. Gould). Morton Gould & his Orch. Columbia M 706 (4) $5.85	Big, rather metallic liveness, à la Hollywood. Wide range, plenty of sharp highs. Good sense of large orchestra.	A to A—	*(See below)* Ingenious orchestrations, expert playing, tonal opulence make up for tastelessness of most of this.
HOVHANNES, PIANO CONCERTO: "LOUSADZAK." "TZAIKERK." orch. cond. by composer. Disc 876 (3) $5.62	Disc's first major orchestral effort on its own; good work. Piano very good, well balanced with orch. and solos.	A— to B+	Remarkable stuff, based on Near-East (Armenian) musical expression, plus some "Western" key balance, etc. Monotonous first time, grows greatly on rehearing.

SPLENDID CONVULSIONS

THE two albums above—Morton Gould and Alban Berg—strangely sum up the end of an era. The opera with the outlandish name, "Wozzeck," though virtually unknown here, was a milestone in twentieth-century music. Those short recorded excerpts are of priceless value to students, amateur or otherwise, of recent music. And strangely enough, now that "Wozzeck," at least in part, is actually to be heard —the dreadful noises one had been led to expect are not forthcoming. Instead the music is, if dissonant, easily comprehensible in mood and not more difficult to take in than the same composer's relatively familiar Violin Concerto (C M 465).

"Wozzeck" is unmistakably of the Schönberg school and that school is, as unmistakably, the last high flight of the late Romanticism. "Wozzeck" is Wagner in every line, and it is even more Gustav Mahler. Here is no trivial frustration, no tinny disillusionment, but rather an earlier and more terrible artistic struggle; here is the vast, frightening, epic darkness that began to close over the last years of the nineteenth century and over its music, a fantastic, echoing nightmare of doubt in which the great exultations of Romanticism rose to a shriek of hysteria. It was that sense of cosmic doom, a kind of Götterdämmerung on earth, first felt in the later Wagner, then touched upon by Strauss, nurtured by Mahler and the young Schönberg, that passed onward, now less hysterical, more resigned, into the hands of Alban Berg. It is a strange and unreal world of expression, this music of Berg, a world that reflects the terrors but denies the hard, reality of the century of jazz and satire (even though it speaks an advanced language). Written after World War I, it still looks out from the towering, burnt-out vantage of the past. Here Romanticism returns to the weird and disordered purlieus, half sane, half fantastic, from which it once emerged.

Morton Gould's "Showcase" will please many; hence my opinion is entirely personal. But does anyone else hear in some of this music an incongruous echo of the same postlude to a great creative period? Here is a gifted musician who has the technical world of music at his feet. All the perquisites that fabulous money can buy are his; the musical means of three centuries are at his disposal. He has everything. Yet what extraordinary frustration! A sad, petulant rehash of semi-popular tunes in a pseudo-classical manner, full of those worrying, frightened, frustrated little rushings-up-and-down of beautiful violin tone, those slitherings of meaningless chromatics that pass for emotional expression where no real vitality exists.

Possibly it was a dreadful vision of this very impotence that moved those titans, Mahler and Berg, to such splendid convulsions!

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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the Phoenix Nest

WASHINGTON, D.C.

HEARING the twang among the porticoes
Where one expected only noble Romans,
You turn and keep a mild surprise, seeing
The public man descend the marble stairs,
Yourself, but for the grace of God, in the blue day
Among the floating domes. He disappears,
A little heady in that atmosphere,
Trailing the air of power, a solemn figure
Quick in the abstract landscape of the state.
His passage leaves you baffled in the void,
Looking out between two columns. The sun
Burns in the silence of the white façades.
How shall you act in this outlandish place,
Strange city, being neither Rome nor home?

ERNEST KROLL.

* * *

Once in a while a book is a work of art, and sings. And how many "picture books" are there today of which that is true? One can remember what Howard Pyle did with such books as "The Wonder Clock" and "Twilight Land," and his own "Robin Hood," and the "color" in his black-and-white, but "rarely, rarely comest thou, spirit of delight," and we have waited a long time! Now we have "Song of Robin Hood," the ballads being selected and edited by Anne Malcolmson, with music arranged by Grace Castagnetta; but the important thing about it is that it was designed and is illustrated by Virginia Lee Burton, an artist of the first order. She tells us, in her word about the illustrations, how she planned the book, how she arrived at a combination of pen-and-ink and scratchboard for her style, how she decided to illustrate each verse, that the original drawings were made in the same size as reproduced, why she wove in the flora of England, with a hint from the old scriptorium; but the magnificent success of the luxuriant decoration, the humor, the composition of the illustrations, the running comment on the verse in tiny drawings, all this "must be seen to be appreciated"; and how she preserved her eyesight is a miracle! Her own black-and-white has great color, and she owes nothing to anybody as to style. The book should win some sort of gold medal. I am glad I have a first edition inscribed by the artist; for "Song of Robin Hood" is an event, and a permanency among rare books. In private life Miss Burton is Mrs. George Demetrios, her husband having written that delightful recent book "When Greek Meets Greek." She is also the moving spirit of the Folly Cove Designers, whose block prints have now become so widely known.

* * *

CHRISTMAS LIST

I cannot quite remember
What happened last December
25th. Did I, in one last orgy,
Buy two red ties for Georgie,
Or was that Jim?
Did I send Grandma candy,
To Uncle, Three Crown brandy,
And socks to Kim?
It's all so very hazy,
I think I'm going crazy—
I cannot seem to bridge

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ONE pleasant spring, some 13 years ago, four Americans came to Paris. There was a RICH YOUNG ATHLETE. He was startlingly handsome, but with an air of unexpected brutality. There was something terribly wrong with him that was a danger to anyone who loved him. There was a PRETTY GIRL FROM KANSAS who was willing to face this danger because she was too innocent to understand it. There was also a WELL-PRESERVED SORCERESS who claimed coyly that she was a thousand years old—and dabbled in mystic cults. And there was an ORDINARY YOUNG STUDENT who saw the three others become entangled in a nightmare—and determined to save the only one worth saving. Read THE ACCOMPLICE, a novel of suspense in a Gothic mood by *Matthew Head*. An Inner Sanctum Suspense Special. $2.50

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The interim.
I make on each December
A list, so I'll remember,
(They're tolerated now
As "Mummy's whim")
Yet come the following season,
And for no rhyme or reason
They've vanished in the air
Like seraphim!

DOROTHY LAMB.

* * *

Mrs. Frances Challenger, of Kealakekua, Hawaii, writes as follows:

I was highly surprised; first, to find in the July 5 Phoenix Nest the remarkable poem called Rupert Brooke's last; second to read that it was "hitherto unpublished." If a dozen other people do not tell Mr. Stringer first, perhaps he would be interested in knowing that it has been published, and in what. Possibly the "unknown lover of poetry" who "abstracted" the lines can be traced. This is my story:

On a long world tour I met (1928) a part-Indonesian youth, then a student in Rotterdam, who had been immensely impressed and helped by an English book, particularly by a poem in it. He had memorized the poem and so did I when I heard it. Later I copied it, thinking it was too good to trust to memory. The book was "Tell England," a World War I story by E. Raymond. My journal does not say whether this book credited the poem to anyone else or not, merely "From 'Tell England,' by young English soldier of Gallipoli, one of few poems taught me at the right time by the right person."

The poem, as printed in this book, differs in a few places from the one printed in *SRL*, so I send a copy of it as it appears in the book. I feel the "Tell England" version is better; and someone may be able to settle the interesting question as to which version is Brooke's. If the author has, or had access to, the original, the printed version may be closer to Brooke's wording than the one written down from memory. As I value the poem so, I'd be glad to know the outcome on this.

And utmost knowledge—I have
lived for these,
Lived deep, and let the lesser
things live long.
The everlasting hills, the lakes
and trees
Who'd give their thousand years
to sing this song
Of life and man's high sensibilities
Which I into the face of death
can sing.
O, Death, thou poor and disappointed thing—
Strike if thou wilt and soon,
strike breast and brow
For I have lived, and thou canst
rob me now
Only of some long life that ne'er
has been.
The life that I have lived, so full,
so keen
Is mine. I hold it firm beneath thy
blow
And, dying, take it with me where
I go.

* * *

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 716

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

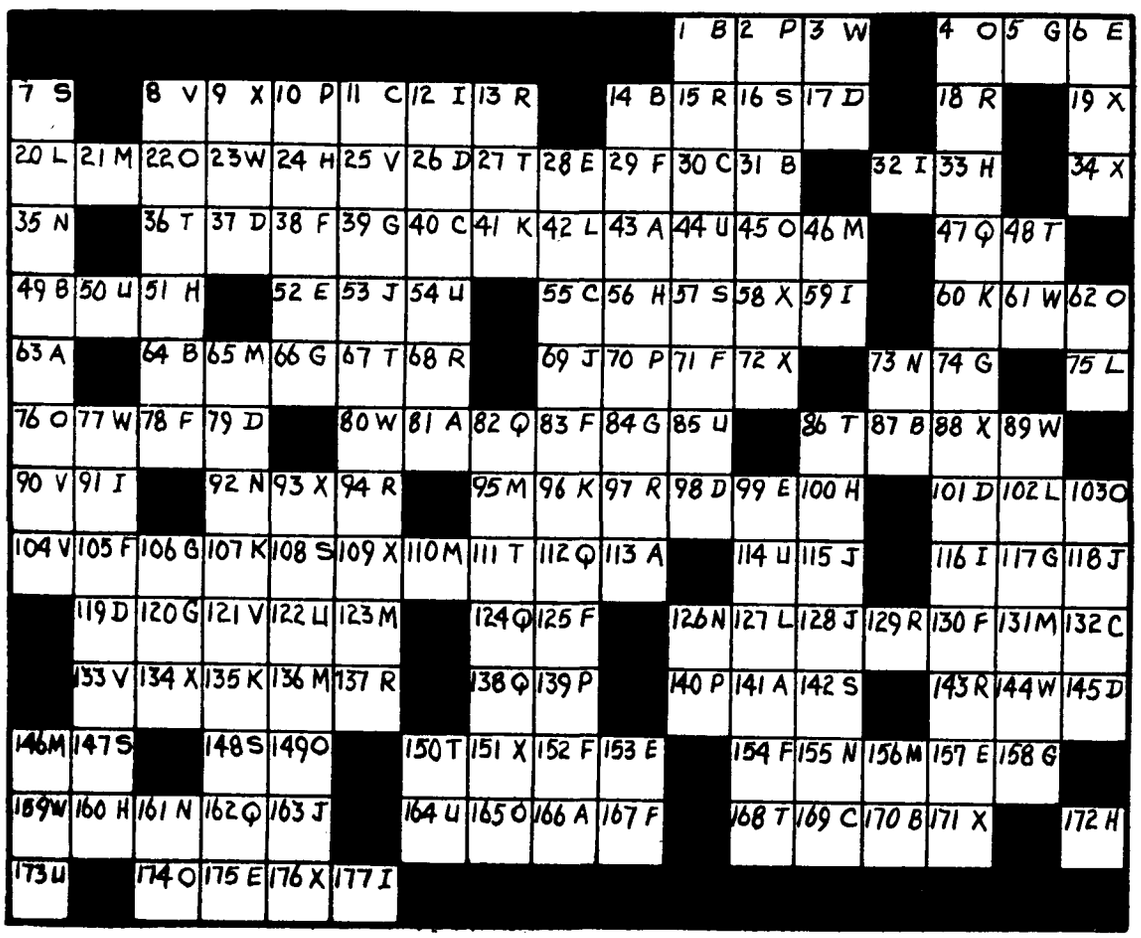
DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. River between Indiana and Illinois.	63 81 43 166 113 141
B. Gives or expresses acquiescence.	64 170 49 87 1 31 14
C. Tells; reveals; tattles (2 wds.; colloq.).	55 11 40 132 169 30
D. Lofty; extremely high or great.	17 26 119 98 37 101 145 79
E. A platform or dais.	99 153 52 6 175 28 157
F. Those constituting the body of a nation as distinct from its leaders (3 wds.).	105 154 78 83 38 71 167 125 152 130 29
G. Microscopic anatomy.	117 84 106 39 5 158 120 66 74
H. Indeclinable nouns (Gram.).	56 33 172 160 100 51 24
I. A jequirity bean.	12 32 116 91 59 177
J. Another name for Swat (India).	69 118 53 163 128 115
K. Persons added to a jury to make up the number regularly summoned (Law).	96 135 41 107 60
L. Applied to certain small ants living in subterranean nests (S.W. U. S., Mexico).	127 20 102 42 75
M. Absorbing; monopolizing.	131 136 146 21 46 123 95 110 65 156

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
N. Boy's game of hitting a nut on the end of a string against one held by an adversary (Eng.).	126 35 73 155 161 92
O. A collection of money taken at a religious service.	76 174 149 165 22 103 62 45 4
P. American colonist's salutation to an Indian, meaning friend, crony.	139 2 140 70 10
Q. Author with Sackville of first English tragedy ("Gorboduc," 1561).	162 124 82 47 138 112
R. Hard, red earthenware made in England by two brothers (1690-1730; 2 wds.).	94 68 15 97 13 143 18 129 137
S. Another name for the game in Word N.	108 148 16 7 142 57 147
T. Brass wind instrument once called a sackbut.	150 168 48 86 36 111 27 67
U. Opera by Mozart given at Berkshire Festival summer of '47.	114 122 44 164 54 85 50 173
V. A decoy, as for gamblers; a by-bidder (Slang).	133 90 8 25 104 121
W. Unmanageably bulky or ponderous.	77 61 3 144 23 80 89 159
X. Name given to Dr. Samuel Johnson by Smollett (with "of Literature").	109 151 171 58 134 72 88 34 19 93 9 176

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 13 of this issue.

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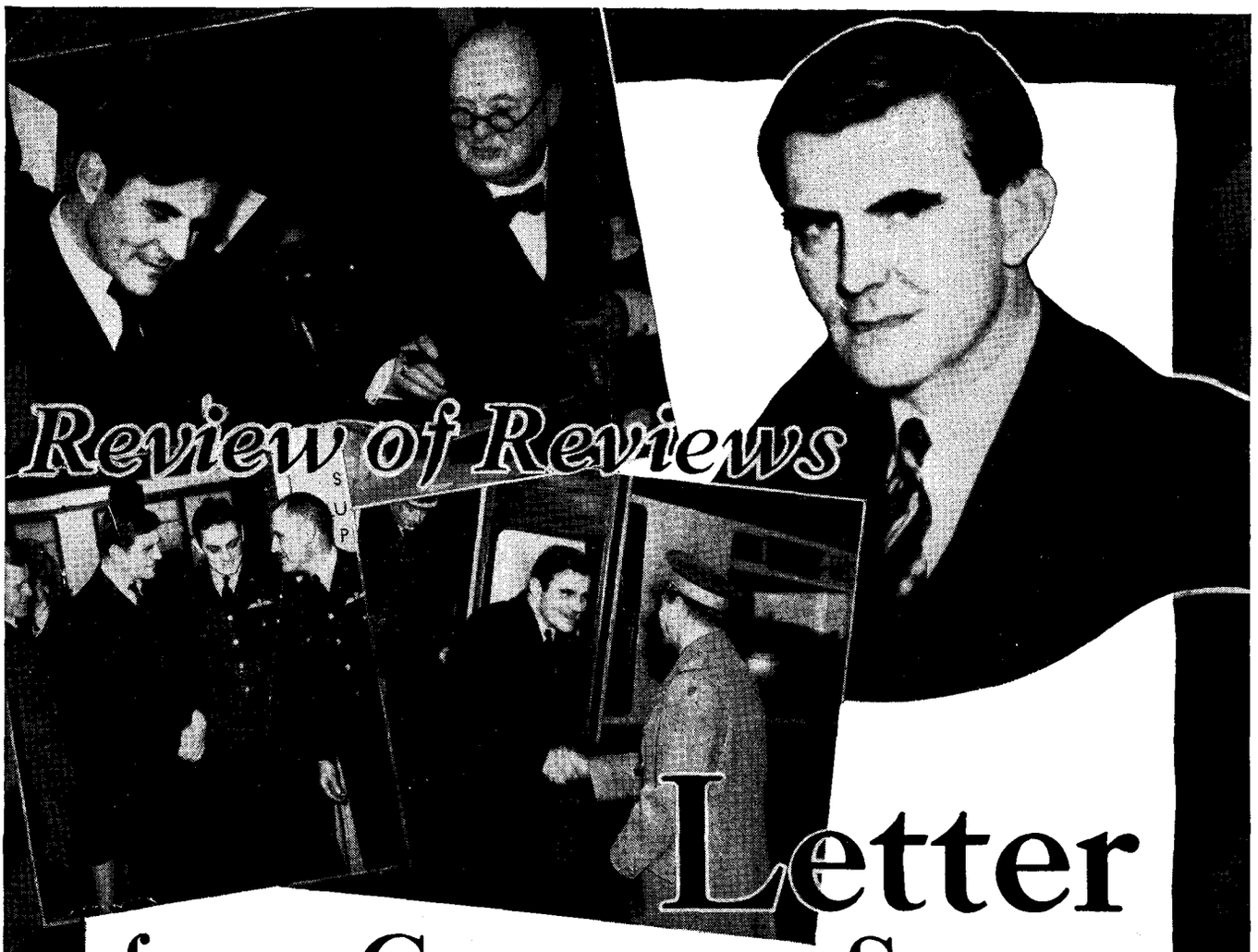

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